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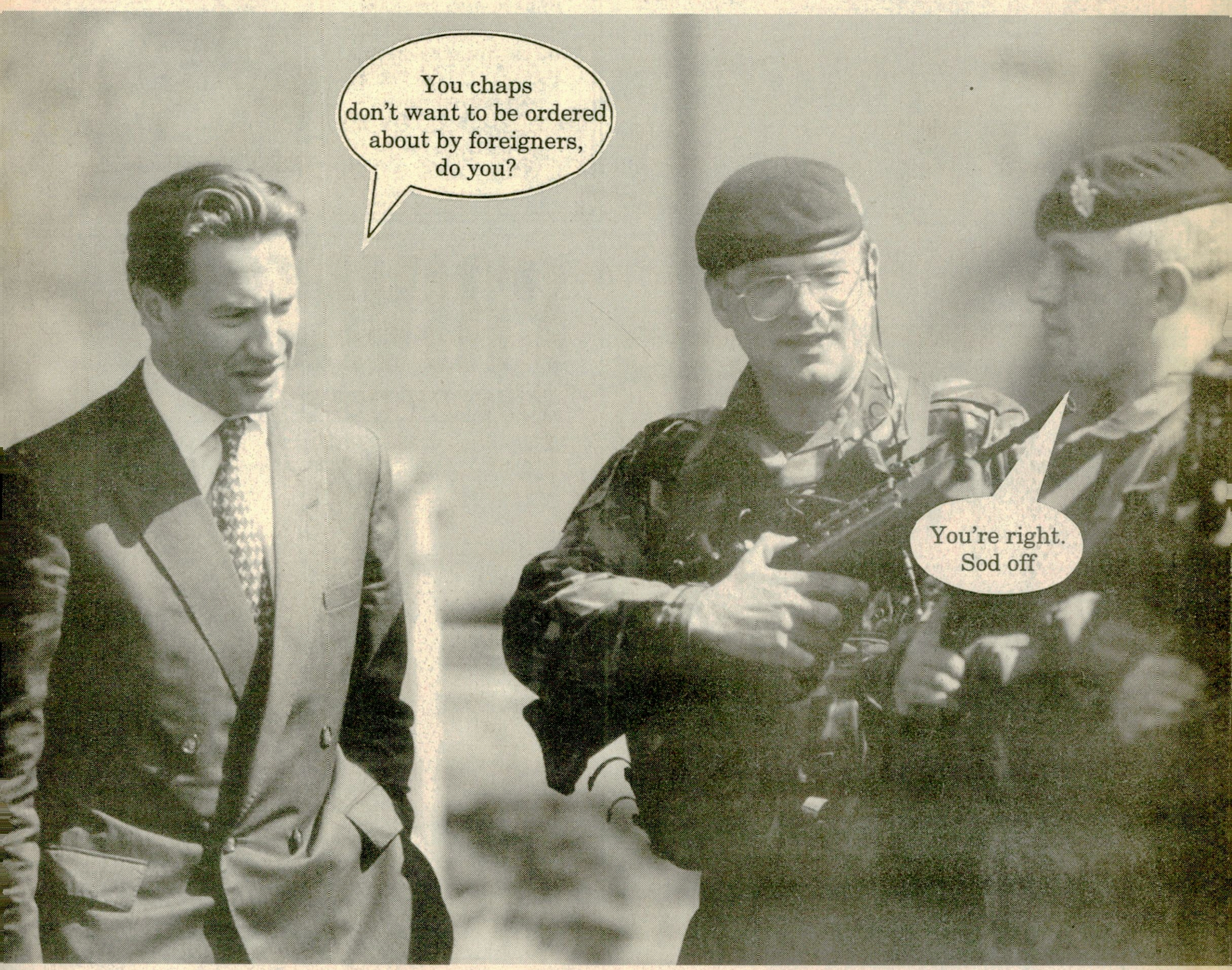

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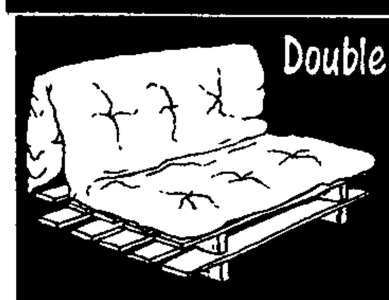

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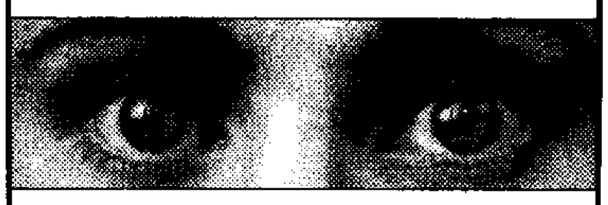

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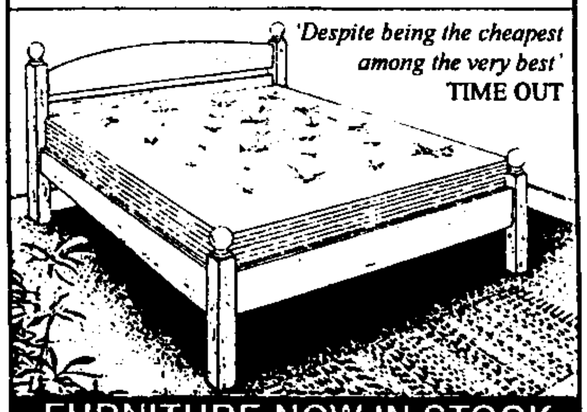

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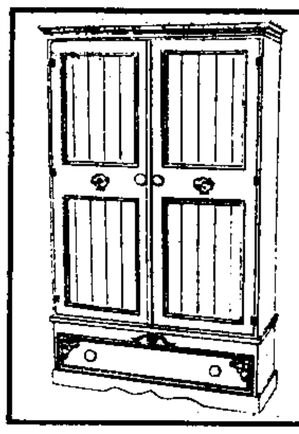

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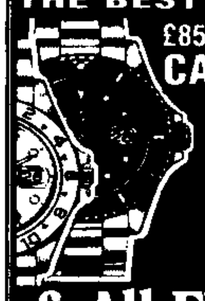

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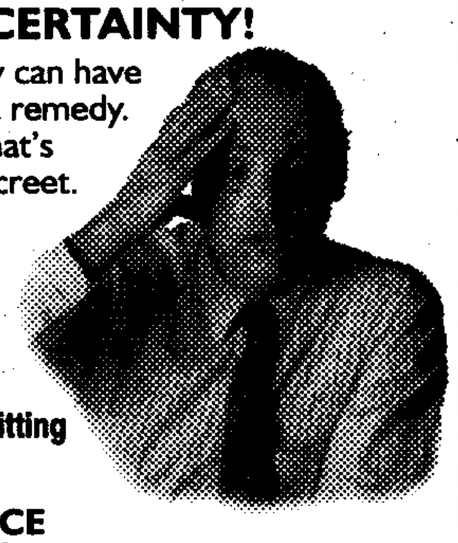

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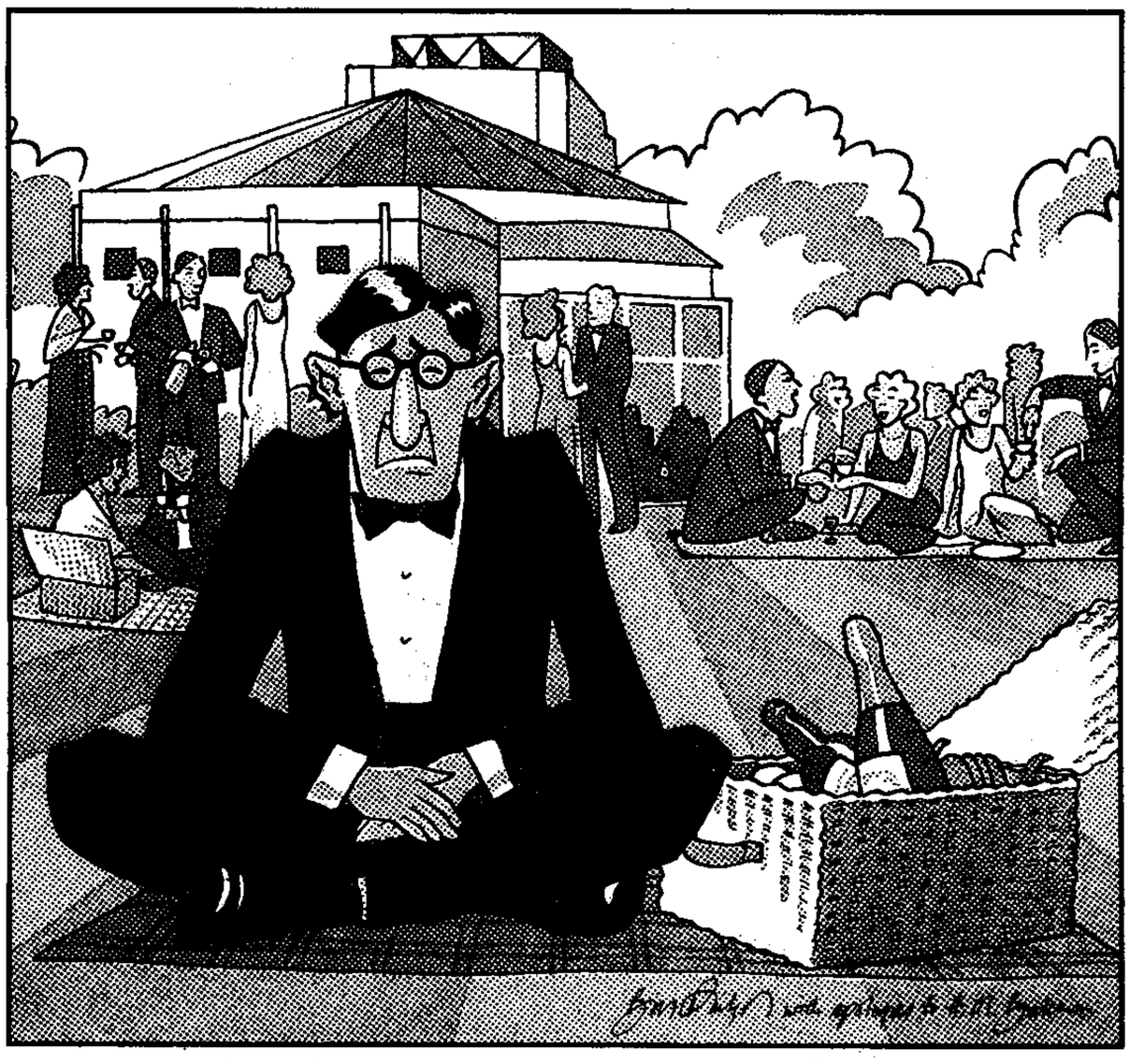

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A memorial service was held for the late Sir Gordon Gnome. The Bishop of London presided, and addresses were given by Sir David Frostie, Miss Joan Collagen and Ms Roxanne Cadillac. The congregation giggled reverently as Ms Cadillac paid tribute to "my Gnomey's prowess in the boardroom and in the bedroom". Mr Claus von Bulow read a solemn passage from the novel *Superbitch* by Miss Shirley Conran. And then Mr Spigismond Topes performed a solo of the anthem "Sex Machine (Get On Up Like A)". At the toga party in the crypt afterwards the canapés were handed round by Mr Nigel Pratt-Dumpster and Mr Taki Takealotofcokeupthenos.

Special guests included: Lady Jasminta Gnome (widow), Lady Araminta de Cazenove-Gnome (widow), Lady Kalamazoo Gnome (widow), Mrs Ethel Gnome (original wife) and Miss Bimbo Money-grabber (companion).

Other guests included: Baron Kevin de Rothschild (representing Consolidated Money plc); Sir Jammy Fishpaste MEP (representing the Marmite industry); Mr John Zooloo (representing the Siberian Tiger industry and Chief Buthelezi); Mr Victor Disgusting Lowndes (representing the Pornographic and Gambling industries); Mr Eddie Pimp, chairman of "Escorts R Us"; and the Dowager Lady Forkbender of Rievaulx. Many other friends and business associates were present. Those who could not be present included HM The Queen, Lady Lavinia Pratt-Dumpster and the late Lord Lucan, who sent his apologies.

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CONFERENCE SPECIAL

WHO says Tory conferences are not about policy-making? In Blackpool, like a cornered skunk, the party was oozing policy from every pore, scenting a last chance to pull off another surprise election win.

The Tories think they can do it so long as the treasury chief secretary finds the money. And early in the week William Waldegrave rashly confided: "Every time I take a spending minister for a walk down the promenade, I come back with an extra £100 million."

After that they had him walking his bollocks off. Up and out by five, a trip to the pier before and after breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner — plus a midnight constitutional. By Friday Willy Wally was half a stone lighter but the chancellor's slush fund weighed-in at a little over three billion pounds. But will this buy enough votes?

"BRING back Hanley!" was the unlikely cry from conference delegates at Blackpool after the appalling gaffe of Tory party chairman Brian Mawhinney over the Camden "hopscotch loonies" affair.

Mawhinney got a terrific belly laugh from the conference when he cited a Camden society called "Hopscotch" as an example of the terrors of the loony left. Whoops! The society had nothing to do with the game of hopscotch, and was funded not by the Labour council but by the very rightwing, er, home office.

Mawhinney's mistake was spotted by hacks before his speech had even finished, and his expected triumphal march through the hall after the speech was blocked by a bevy of hacks gleefully pointing out his crass error.

But instead of taking this in good heart, as his gaffe-plagued predecessor Jeremy Hanley was inclined to do, Mawhinney lost his temper. Incoherently f-ing and blinding, he told the hacks he had made a great speech, that it was typical of their pinko prejudices to pick out one rotten apple and forcefully shoved his way to safety.

ALAN HOWARTH's shock decision to leave the Tory party and join Labour without bothering to consult the electorate of Stratford on Avon will not exacerbate any financial problems arising from his membership of Lloyd's.

He became a "name" at Lloyd's in 1989 and has managed to avoid some of the nastier syndicates. His total indebtedness, on the worst possible forecast, is unlikely to be more than £30,000 — less than an MP's annual salary.

Staying in parliament, moreover, won't upset his consultancy with Virgin's Richard Branson, who was absolutely delighted to hear of his consultant's change of heart. Branson has been pursuing Blair with almost as much enthusiasm as he pursued Margaret Thatcher when she was in Downing Street.

The universal enthusiasm in the Labour party for its new recruit contrasts strangely with its passion for true democracy in 1981 and 1982 when several Labour MPs left the party to join the new Social Democratic party. Then the Labour leaders called on the "apostates" to "show their true colours" by resigning their seats and standing again for the SDP.

None of the current Labour leaders who were then in parliament — John Prescott, Jack Straw, Robin Cook, Frank Dobson, Michael Meacher etc — took the current line that an MP should wait for the next general election before standing in their true colours. In the event only one convert, Bruce Douglas-Mann, forced a by-election — in Mitcham, south London. The Tory won (and has been there ever since).

LABOUR's supposed PR coup — an alleged "deal" with British Telecom to connect schools and hospitals to the information superhighway — has been shortlived.

BT tells the trade paper *Network News* that no deal has been struck — although it would certainly be useful for BT if it had been. Readers of the broadsheets, however, will be confused. According to the *Observer* the deal would cost BT £17 to £21 billion, while the *Times* said the figure was "negligible". For once the Wapping hacks were right: the better-informed *Computer Weekly* has described it as the "deal of the century"... for BT.

Why would it be so good for BT? Because much of the cable infrastructure will already have been laid by the next general election; and because BT, to compete, would in any case have been obliged to connect public services at no cost — the existing cable operators are already waiving their sign-on fees. Nor did Labour extract a promise of a free or cheap service for schools and hospitals: under the "deal" they would have to pay BT the same as everyone else.

BT will profit hugely if it can enter the junk "entertainment" market at the outset rather than waiting until 2002 as it is currently supposed to. By 2002 the value of such essential educational services as, er, interactive shopping and porn will be worth £500 million a year.

December 1994: Lord Wakeham, an accountant and former super-loyal cabinet minister under Margaret Thatcher and John Major, joins the board of the Bristol and West Building Society.

March 1995: Lord Wakeham joins the board of N.M. Rothschild, merchant bank.

August 1995: Bristol and West closes 24 branches of its up-market estate agency, Hamptons, and decides to sell the remaining 45.

September 1995: Bristol and West appoints a new merchant bank to supervise the sale: N.M. Rothschild.

October 1995: Deadline for offers close. An announcement of the lucky bidder is expected any day.

Will Rothschild and its director Lord Wakeham get a fair deal for the Bristol and West and its director Lord Wakeham? If you think this is an unfair question, you can complain to the chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, Lord Wakeham.

THE government's chief adviser on the school curriculum, Dr Nicholas Tate, bemoans the decline of traditional history lessons.

Great historical figures and events are vanishing from the curriculum, he says, signalling a nation "nearing its terminal stages".

His opinions on the subject haven't always been so conventional. Indeed, in an article in *Special Education: Forward Trends*, he gave some useful tips for teaching history. Pupils could learn more from "the everyday lives of ordinary people — as opposed to the study of great men and women and great events", opined the now famous traditionalist.

- ***Slicker on Ernest Saunders*** *28*
- ***McNab on Portillo*** *8*
- ***Richard Littlejohn's Diary*** *24*
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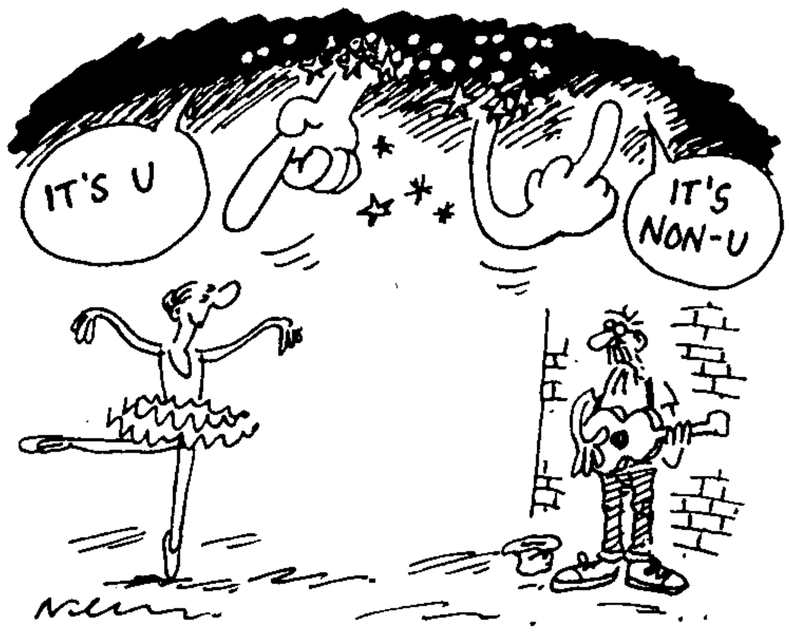


HP SAUCE (Contd)

TORY party spin doctors have failed abysmally in their attempt to produce a glossy corporate-style magazine with which to woo party members.

The quarterly was to be called *Opinion Maker*, and the publisher Harrington Kilbride was contracted to produce a dummy. This included articles from Tory luminaries such as Paul Judge, director-general of the party, on "management as a national asset", and Lord Hanson on Hanson being a world class company.

There was also a profile of yesterday's moron Jeremy Hanley, and an article by the chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, on birdwatching.

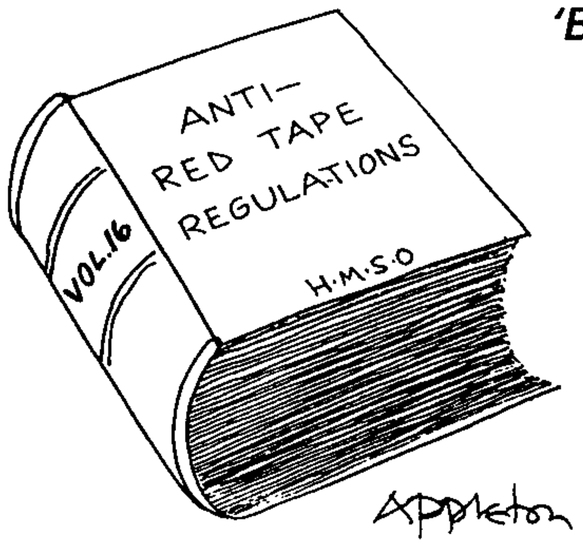
With such exciting editorial in prospect Harrington Kilbride decided that *Opinion Maker* would need 45 pages of advertising to be viable. All the normal Tory businesses were approached... but to no avail.

Two arse-licking privatised utilities, British Telecom and British Gas, signed up for adverts which filled two pages but left the other 43 chillingly empty. Inexplicably companies did not want their name to be seen in connection with that of the Conservative party. Whatever can this mean?

WELSH Night at the Labour conference in Brighton was an uncomradely occasion. Veteran MP Roy Hughes, 70, was outraged that BBC Wales interviewed Paul Flynn, fellow Labour MP who chairs the Commons transport select committee, over the Severn tunnel that emerges in Hughes's constituency.

Fuming, he confronted BBC lobby correspondent David Cornock with the warm greeting: "You fucking shithouse. You're always creeping to Flynn" before adding to his colleague: "He's a fucking shithouse." Cornock explained it wasn't his decision — nor his report — but to no avail. New Labour clearly hasn't reached Wales yet.

'Backbiter'



CAN'T PAY, WILL PAY...

ON 27 July the National Rivers Authority's acting director of personnel, Mr I.L. Graham, told the trade unions what their members were going to get in the next financial year.

"The general increase offered," he wrote, "is 1.4 per cent." Another 1.44 per cent maximum could be won by the very best workers as a performance bonus.

On 13 September the NRA's personnel manager, Mr M.D. Usher-Clark, sent a confidential letter to the chief executive on a much more important matter: senior managers' bonuses for April-September this year. "We are constrained," he mourned, "to a total cost of 7.3 per cent of the senior management payroll. The allocation available to individuals is up to a maximum of 15 per cent."

THE management of ASDA was very sorry when it had to tell campaigners for a £4 minimum wage outside its supermarket in Pudsey, Yorks, that it could not afford to pay that sort of money to mere check-out clerks and shopgirls: £3.47 an hour was the absolute maximum.

A week later the company's deputy chief executive, a man no one has ever heard of before called Allan Leighton, "exercised" (ie cashed in) share options given to him on a plate for nothing three years ago. He netted £2.45 million on the deal.

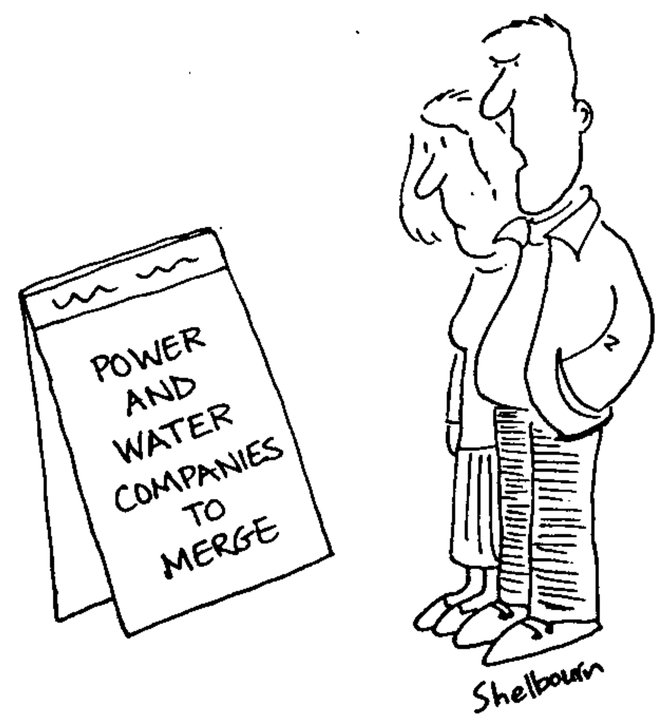
Dr B. Ching will return next issue.

NEWS

AS electricity producers National Power, PowerGen and Scottish Power try to take over the independent distribution companies — a move the government has accepted and is thus likely to happen — the strongest argument in favour of privatisation bites the dust.

For Stephen Littlechild, electricity regulator, the government's acceptance of what the industry calls "vertical integration" marks the turning point in his lifelong ambition to prove that competition would provide diversity and give customers a choice.

Instead, the likely scenario is that customers will be locked into buying electricity from the local monopoly held by the distributors, who are free to decide that their "own" generator is the best one to patronise.



"I suppose now we'll get an electric lawnmower ban"

THE gas bubble has started to burst and the wonder-fuel that was going to cut the cost of electricity is in deep trouble.

The huge gas turbines needed have developed a disastrous wobble and have been sent back to General Electric, which is trying to cure them. This has prevented commissioning of 2,000 megawatts of new combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) power stations and resulted in the price of electricity from the pool surging upwards.

The price is decided by the amount of capacity available compared with demand, and few power stations are available because the gas turbines won't work. So the generating companies can actually charge more for electricity because of their gas blunder.

THE reality of Mrs Thatcher's vision of a nation of small shareholders is being demonstrated at Eastern Electricity since Hanson, the Anglo-American conglomerate, bought out the company.

The remaining shareholders have received a letter telling them that Hanson's cash offer for their shares has been made unconditional. Once the number of acceptances of that offer reaches 90 percent, Hanson will be entitled to take compulsorily the other shares off any unwilling shareholders.

After this, the hapless shareholders are informed, they will cease to be Eastern shareholders, will receive no further dividends and will not be able to vote at agms. The letter "strongly urges" them to send off their acceptance if they have not already done so. So much for the power of the shareholder...

YORKSHIRE Water's woes continue as Bradford remains on the verge of drought, and Leeds, which was supplying Bradford, almost runs dry itself.

Nearly 100 tankers that run night and day between the two cities have been redirected as the stricken water company is forced to draw 280 tanker loads, or seven million litres of water a day, from the River Derwent.

The Derwent supply is not limitless, of course; and YW is now looking even further afield — to Newcastle and the vast reserves of the Keilder reservoir in Northumberland that can be accessed via a pipeline. Northumbria Water may be sympathetic, but it won't give it away: shareholders, along with the tanker companies, can expect bumper profits at the expense of Yorkshire consumers.

Several water tankers have already been involved in crashes after inexperienced agency drivers, drafted in for the emergency, loaded the tankers wrongly or drove them dangerously.

Yorkshire Water's response to its pisspoor performance and even poorer public image has been bold: during the summer it advised staff not to wear or carry anything that would identify them as YW employees for fear of being lynched during their lunchbreak.

Staff now receive so many angry complaints that a therapist is being employed at the firm's Bradford offices to relieve tension and stress with massage. Sixty harassed clerks have asked for the treatment, which is paid for by the company.

COMPUTER problems in Yorkshire, where Andersen Consulting, the world's largest IT consultancy, has given managers of the Northern and Yorkshire regional health authority just 14 days notice of its intention to cease running vital hospital support systems.

This surprised many of the managers who thought they had renewed long-term deals with Andersen in May 1995 after reassurances about the future.

Andersen was last involved in an NHS computer cock-up in 1992, when it played a leading role in the £43 million Wessex fiasco (*Eyes passim*). And who advised North West Water over its computerised billing system — the one that has cost the privatised utility £340 million and accounts for half of each customer's annual bill (see *Eye* 882)? Why, step forward Andersen Consulting.

Other Andersen balls-ups include their advice to the department of social security on the programme to put benefits information on the computer, a scheme which cost the DSS a paltry £1.9 billion. And Andersen also won a contract this year to build the "NIRS2", the new national insurance computer system.

SCOTTISH quangocrats are continuing the traditional pastime of awarding themselves piles of cash.

Previous misdemeanours included a building firm, Morrison Construction, winning a contract to build North of Scotland Water Authority's new HQ. Its owner, Fraser Morrison, had been asked in his capacity as chair of Highland and Islands Enterprise to advise on the bid and he wholeheartedly recommended his own company (see *Eye* 881). The secretary of state for Scotland, George Kynoch, rapidly cleared the quangocrat of misbehaviour.

Perhaps this is not entirely surprising as Mr Kynoch is himself no stranger to quango largesse. His own company, Kynoch of Keith, was given £500,000 by Scottish Enterprise. The quango has not tried to recover the money despite the company's subsequent sale and the transfer of all its jobs to the south of England.

Another figure in the Morrison story is John Robertson, the Highland's quango king who chairs the North of Scotland Water Authority and sits as a member of Highland and Islands Enterprise, under his chum Fraser Morrison.

Mr Robertson does not confine his interests to quangos. He, like Morrison, owns a building company, S. & J.D. Robertson Group Ltd, which has applied to build a large new ambulance station on Skye replacing the nearest one on the mainland now that the Skye bridge has opened.

Mainland doctors are dismayed, fearing that bad weather will stop ambulances crossing the new bridge that no one wants. They also say the relocation could increase ambulance travelling time by 10 minutes. Perhaps they should voice their fears to the chairman of the Highland Health Board who will surely be concerned by this threat to health. He is none other than... John Robertson.

Street of Shame

NOW that he is slated to retire as editor of the London *Evening Standard*, Stewart Steven is anxious his efforts to secure a knighthood from John Major should not be jeopardised by any loose canons on the *Standard* ship.

Lord Bethell, a regular recipient of Steven's largesse in the form of editorial page commissions, has been lobbying hard for his patron; and surely Major will not have forgotten Steven's championship of his cause in the summer leadership campaign.

Nevertheless Steven is taking no chances. A.N. Wilson, who has been covering the Rosemary West trial for the paper, wrote a lead item for his general Friday column in which he sought to link the news events of the week — the trial and the Tory party conference — by drawing a surreal comparison between John Major and Lady Thatcher on the one hand and Fred and Rosemary West on the other.

When Steven saw the copy he decided to pull Wilson's entire column and replace it with one by a leader-writer, Peter Bradshaw. However, Bradshaw's lead item about Tory party chairman Dr Brian Mawhinney was deemed too irreverent for the lead and on Steven's orders was moved down page.

AS revealed in the last *Eye*, Max Hastings's departure from the *Daily Telegraph* was precipitated by his loyalty to his deputy, Veronica Wadley, who was threatened with demotion.

It now turns out that their friendship goes back a long way: Hastings's sister, Claire, was in the same class as Wadley at the Francis Holland School in London more than 30 years ago.

In 1961 another classmate submitted a limerick to the school magazine about her great contemporary: "A girl named Veronica Wadley/Was decent and upright and godly,/Except at weekends/When she stayed with her friends/And behaved most excessively oddly."

For some reason the school mag declined to publish it.

MAX "Hitler" Hastings will inherit hidden depths of talent when he takes over at the *Evening Standard* — not least the qualifications of new reporter Marina Barker, who is soon to join the dire *Londoner's Diary*.

Salivating hacks have discovered that La Barker (36-24-36) once bared all for *Playboy*. Can an assistant editorship be far behind?

THE *Sunday Express Magazine* pulled its Out to Lunch interview with Edward Albee, three times Pulitzer prize-winning playwright, when at the last minute editor Brian Hitchens realised Albee was homosexual.

Sunday Depress readers would be offended, said Mussolini, even though Albee was quoted as saying: "I don't go around thinking about the fact that I'm gay. It's not a subject I write about. There's a great danger of ghetto-ising it and I'm in enough minorities already — white, male, educated."

Albee also said he had never heard of Jeffrey Archer, and perhaps this was Hitchens's real reason for spiking the interview. Either way, Andrew Duncan, who conducts the Out to Lunch interviews under the name of Tattler, resigned immediately, apparently writing to Hitchens that he quite understood the reason for not wanting an intelligent man like Albee to soil the pages of an increasingly down market and neanderthal publication.

FOGHORN-voiced hack John Sweeney had a scoopette recently when he managed to smuggle himself on to a Channel Island owned by the highly secretive and immensely rich Barclay twins. He used this exploit as the peg for a 4,000-word piece in the *Observer* and a film on his BBC show, *The Spin*.

The gist of Sweeney's argument was that the press had failed in its duty to investigate the brothers' business activities. "They play a hard game when it comes to shutting down journalistic inquiry," he wrote. "Even the Fleet Street diaspora runs scared..."

Including, it seems, the supposedly fearless *Observer*. No sooner had Sweeney's piece appeared than the Barclays sent solicitors' letters to both the BBC and the *Obs* threatening to sue. The BBC stood by its story, pointing out that every fact in it could be verified. Over at the *Observer*, however, editor Andrew Jaspan capitulated at once, printing a grovelling apology for "any distress or inconvenience caused to David and Frederick Barclay" — thereby severely undermining the BBC's chances of mounting a defence.

But what exactly was he apologising for? "We wish to make it clear," the statement explained, "that when we said David and Frederick Barclay did not pay their fair whack of taxes, there was, as we said in the article, no suggestion that they were evading tax or otherwise acting illegally." Sweeney's piece had indeed emphasised this point: so the apology was not only craven but also quite unnecessary.

Still, it is useful to know that, under Jaspan's editorship, the *Observer* will do its best to avoid "inconveniencing" rich and influential businessmen.

Meanwhile the publicity-shy Barclays press on with their campaign to intimidate hacks who write about them. One of the lawyers they have retained for the purpose is Geoffrey Robertson QC. Presumably this cannot be the same Geoffrey Robertson QC who in 1993 won a special award from the Freedom of Information Campaign, in recognition of his heroic crusades on behalf of press freedom and investigative journalism?

MOHAMMED Fayed has issued libel writs against *Vanity Fair* and its proprietors, Condé Nast, following a none-too-flattering profile of the Harrods boss in last month's issue of the magazine.

To show he means business Fayed has also withdrawn all advertising from Condé Nast publications on both sides of the Atlantic. *House and Garden* editor Sue Crewe has already seen £200,000 of Harrods adverts disappear from her autumn schedules; other titles in the group — including *Vogue* and *Tatler* — stand to lose at least as much. Executives at Vogue House in London are now sending urgent messages to their supremo, Nicholas "Tricky Nicky" Coleridge, urging him to persuade *Vanity Fair* to capitulate.

There is just one problem: *Vanity Fair* editor Graydon Carter is determined to fight the case and has been energetically gathering evidence for his defence from former Harrods employees. Will his bosses back him? Or will they conclude, regretfully, that the chequebook is mightier than the pen?

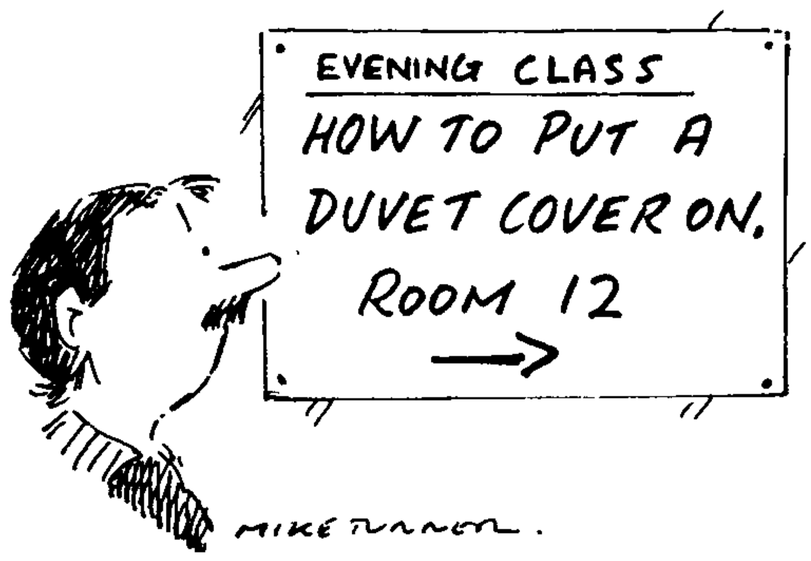
"THE muggers," shrieked the *Sun*, worked into a frenzy by social security secretary Peter Lilley's annual party conference outing to bash the scroungers.

"Thousands are stealing from our pockets," yapped Rupert Murdoch's poodle. "As much as £10bn a year, money that is desperately needed for the poor, the sick and the old."

In its fit of false frenzy the rag clean forgot to mention all those other scroungers — the companies whose meticulously planned tax wheezes deprive the treasury of billions of pounds of "desperately needed" tax revenue.

One British plc fine-tuned its tax affairs so well last year that it paid not the standard 33 percent but just 1 percent corporation tax on its soaraway profits of £778 million! And in 1993-4 and 1992-3 it paid no tax at all — despite profits of £360.9 million and £161.3 million.

The last time this bunch of tax-avoiders paid a penny to "help the poor, the sick and the old" was 1988. And who was this "tax mugger" the *Sun* didn't have the space to expose? Why, step forward News International plc, owners of, er, the *Sun*!



BEING married to The Voice of Reason, *News of the Screws* columnist Woodrow Wyatt, is taking its toll on Lady Verushka Wyatt, fierce protector of their daughter Petronella.

Petronella works at the *Sunday Telegraph* — except, that is, when the weather's too bad. Famously, Mama once rang the *Hellograph* to say Petronella wouldn't be coming in as it was too "windy".

Now, however, mother and daughter have surpassed themselves after Petronella used her column to belittle Westminster council for billing her twice for her council tax last year. The young Wyatt forgot to say that she only got round to paying her council tax bill *this* year when she was threatened last month with a summons for non-payment.

The *Evening Standard* then picked up this lapse of memory and got on the case — sending the Hungarian accented Lady Verushka into telephonic overdrive. "D'you know who I am?" she asked the poor hack who was writing the story. "I'm a great friend of many important people. You vill not be running zis story. You should learn zome respect. Iv you tell anyvon about zis, you vill never vurk again." So much for the freedom of ze press...

HAS Peter McHackey, aka the World's Worst Columnist, finally met his match?

A couple of weeks ago, after noticing a report that "fried Mars bars" were now all the rage in the Scottish town of Stonehaven, McHackey observed in his *Evening Standard* column that there were "few drearier places" than Stonehaven.

The local paper, the Stonehaven *Leader*, was apoplectic. "We're far from dreary — but we are appalled," a front-page editorial declared, listing all the many exciting facilities on offer in the town — such as the "open air swimming pool at Cowie" and "McHardy's the butchers".

The *Leader* also disclosed that McKay had since apologised. "It was an aberration," he told the paper. "I just do not know what came over me." (A long lunch, probably.) But this was not enough: *Leader* editor Joe Watson announced that he was "planning to give McKay a surprise visit at his offices in Kensington".

The burly Watson duly turned up at the *Evening Standard* a few days later, armed with several cans of Baxters' soup — a native Caledonian delicacy, apparently. A free and frank exchange of views ensued.

Alas, Watson's moral indignation on behalf of Stonehaven is slightly disingenuous: although appointed editor of the *Leader* more than a year ago, he continues to commute from his parents' home in Turiff, some 40 miles to the north. Apparently his enthusiasm for Stonehaven is so great he prefers a daily 80-mile journey, including crossing Aberdeen, to actually living in the dreary place.

Awa' wi' ye, Watson! And take McHackey afore ye go!

OMENS for the *Daily Mirror*'s legendary deputy editor Brendan "Chucky" Parsons grow grimmer by the day.

At the Labour conference *Mirror* hack Carol Midgley (soon to join the *Times*) approached Piers "Boy" Morgan, late of the *News of the Screws* and shortly to take over at the *Mirror*. "I hope I'm not speaking out of turn," sneaked Carol, "but you should know that Chucky's a complete fool."

Piers sighed wearily. "You're the 137th person to have told me that."

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HALLO!

THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

HALLO! ANDY McNab, SAS-man-turned-bestselling-author, on the Defence Secretary's tub-thumping speech: "Frankly I don't think Michael Portillo could survive more than 20 minutes in the jungle without a tub of hair gel."

HALLO! DEAR old Gerald Ronson made good use of his time in Ford open prison. He got terribly fit and made friends with a fellow gym-lover called "Rambo".

Now Gerry and he run *the* chicest gym for north London businessmen in the basement of the Heron Building. By invitation only, it starts at 6.30am. Lord Young is one of the keenest attenders and it is *the* place to be!

HALLO! TO STOCKS, glamorous Chelsea nightclub, where I am thrilled to be seated next to handsome TV pundit Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill and his cute friend Samina, model, ex-Bond girl and all-round Asian babe.

Andrew is on sparkling form, but I cannot help noticing the growing agitation of his dusky companion. We have gathered to put a few coppers into the pocket of former England spin bowler John Emburey, but curiously a number of speakers, including black footballer Mr Garth Crooks, address jocular remarks to Andrew, with outlandish references to someone called Pamela Bordes.

"Brillo" beams but the lovely Sam looks thunderous, and I slip away as her friend furiously berates the unchivalrous Brillo for allowing this "prank" to drag on. Whatever the joke, it's obviously not very funny!

HALLO! *MY CHARMING friend Graydon Carter, editor of Vanity Fair, flies into town to host a party for English luvvies at the Bombay Brasserie in Kensington.*

Impeccably well-mannered Claus von Bulow takes a photographer to task for wearing a light-coloured suit. "Zat's a zummer zoot," he declares, "and ze zummer iz over." Nothing can prepare me for the photographer's uncouth reply.

"At least I didn't murder my wife," he mutters as he wanders in the other direction.

HALLO! TO Wyndham's Theatre for the gala reopening of Maggie Smith in *Three Tall Women* — and to check on drama critic Sheridan Morley, selflessly practising the critical code preached by Bernard Shaw (see *Eye* 881): "Sleep, Sir, is also a form of dramatic criticism: besides, I always wake up for the interval."

As Dame Maggie hams wildly on stage, sweet Sherry gives a far more intimate, deeply-felt performance as a large critic taking forty winks. Then, in a stunning *coup de theatre*, I bump into him in exuberant form during the interval with the darling Brian Forbes and the lovely Nanette Newman — when he gives an almost spookily realistic imitation of a Morley awake!

HALLO! MY talented but volatile friend Marco Pierre White, modest superchef at The Restaurant in Knightsbridge's Hyde Park Hotel, has been foully insulted.

The Good Food Guide 1996 has just appeared and the entry for The Restaurant starts: "Marco is a genius..." It goes on to say that "the food is French-inspired (many would say French *and* inspired)", before grovelling about the fish being "sublime", about beautiful tastes, dishes full of flavour, the sheer "brilliance" of the cooking, etc, etc.

These insipid comments enrage Marco. And on the day they are published he is reported in the *Daily Telegraph* as saying of the *Good Food Guide*: "The editor's knowledge of restaurants and food is pathetic." Precisely!

HALLO! *TO THE unveiling of the daring new portrait of the Princess of Wales by artist Henry Mee. Some cruelly say it makes Diana look like Myra Hindley. Critic Brian Sewell makes even more uncomplimentary remarks but then implores, with tears in his eye: "Please, please, don't use my name. I've got so few friends left and if you quote me by name, I'll have none!"*

"You've changed since we first met"

HALLO! TO ST PAUL'S, Knightsbridge, for the memorial service to dear old Lord White — or "Gordy" as we all called him.

Gordy had several claims to fame: he was a rapacious businessman, an indefatigable skirt-chaser and a sometime wife-beater.

Sensibly, however, these facets of his character are left unmentioned. Instead, we are treated to a reading by Baroness Thatcher from the Book of Corinthians about the importance of "faith, hope and charity", and a passage from *Gulliver's Travels* read by Lord King of Wartnaby, the saintly figure who presided over British Airways at the time of its "dirty tricks" campaign against Virgin.

The only jarring note is the choir's rendition of the anthem "In Paradisum", with its suggestion that Gordy will be welcomed into heaven "with Lazarus who once was poor". The idea that Gordy would wish to mix with poor people — or even ex-poor people — is frankly too absurd!

Even more absurd is the presence of someone called Nigel Dempster, who is apparently a reporter from the *Daily Mail*. He is clearly way out of his depth: in his coverage of the service the next day, he prints a picture of Lord Rothschild talking to Jimmy Goldsmith. "Sir James Goldsmith and Lord Hanson share a joke," the caption reads.

HALLO! *THE charming Michael Barrymore has confused many of us by introducing one of his new friends to us as "Serena".*

"Serena" is clearly a dashing middle-aged man, and not an Andrew Neill-style Asian babe. But on closer inspection it becomes clear how the confusion arose. "Serena", it turns out, is none other than Sir Ian McKellen!

LUVVIES

The naked truth of live performance, the revelation of which is my main motive for being in the acting game, depends on two fundamental qualities which the actor must embrace. First is the innate gnosis that the entre universe is locked into the heartbeat of energy passing in a continuum of movement, between performer and audience. Second is a total surrender of self to the void of unconcern as to how the performance is being received. At depth it is a mystery. It's only rock 'n' roll. It's in the box.

RSC actor MICHAEL FEAST
The Guardian

Submitted by Iain Noble.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

HALLO! ENTRANCED by Walt Disney's cartoon *Pocahontas*, I buy the album on which Vanessa Williams sings the winsome theme song, "Colours of the Wind". Such innocence, such purity! Thank goodness this wasn't the Vanessa Williams who in 1994 was stripped of the Miss America title (the first black to win it) when it was revealed that she had posed nude for "lesbian" pictures in *Penthouse*!

HALLO! *WHO has become chief Labour luvvie now that Ken Follet's star is in decline?*

At the media party at which Tony Blair "dropped in" after his conference speech, guess who addressed us all first? None other than Greg Dyke, former employer of Carol Thatcher at TV-am and the only man to whom Lady Thatcher ever apologised when he lost his franchise.

Oh well. First he made Roland Rat — next it will be Tony Blair!

HALLO! WHEREVER he is now, I'm sure *Daily Mail* astrologer Patric Walker is reflecting on the uncanny accuracy of a horoscope he wrote for himself, a Libran, shortly before his death.

Syndicated in the *Bath Chronicle*, it said, somewhat presciently: "This may be your moment to take a giant leap into the unknown. Just ensure that you haven't bought a one-way ticket but one which ensures you of a safe return. Your curiosity may be satisfied sooner than you think."

'The Marquesa'

"It's still just a rumour, Sister Agnes"

NOOKS and CORNERS

CHESTER long ago sold its soul to the heritage industry as well as the Duke of Westminster. The whole city now has the feel of a large half-timbered shopping centre designed primarily for the motorist.

The Rows are full of smart boutiques and the castle is but a giant car park. But there has always been one place which has a genuine feeling of antiquity and that is the mouldering red sandstone cathedral. But not for long, if the dean and chapter, and their architect, Ronald G. Sims, have their way.

The Chester Cathedral appeal, "Building for Tomorrow" — supported by the Prince of Wales — was launched in May and seeks £2.5 million: not to repair the fabric but to make improvements. Naturally a "visitor centre" is to be formed at the west end. At present visitors can enter by one of five doors, but it will obviously be better if they can have money taken off them at one well-policed entrance. A Song School is to be created as well as a new canons' vestry, and new lighting and staging made for concerts in the nave. But the most alarming proposal is for the "renewal" of the nave floor.

At the moment the one thing that makes Chester Cathedral special is the nave floor. Of great age and great beauty, it slopes down towards the east end. Studded with memorials and patterns of old stone flags, it is, perhaps, the English equivalent of the great sea-like floor of St Mark's in Venice with its pleasing undulations. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings considers that this floor "is of great antiquity, possibly dating from the reign of Elizabeth I. Regardless of whatever date, the floor is undoubtedly of significant aesthetic appeal and its worn appearance gives a great feeling of antiquity to the building." Quite.

Alarmed by the prospect of "renewal", the society has called for the repair of the existing floor where it is badly worn away by many feet. But this won't do as the Very Rev Dr Stephen Smalley — that flamboyant enthusiast for Sunday racing who is dean of Chester — wants a nice new level floor with underfloor heating. This will be so much more convenient for holding concerts and other events in the nave. New flexible seating can be installed and there will be no inconvenient changes in level. Pity that so many of the existing furnishings will have to go, along with those magnificent Victorian "Gurney" cathedral stoves which still survive in the aisles.

This flippant destructiveness doesn't seem much to worry the smug and affluent people of Chester. Besides, the cathedral's architect, Ronnie Sims, doesn't much care for criticism. He hates "conservationists, art historians, and the like" and resents the potential power of the Cathedrals Advisory Committee. "This power by committee could prove fatal, leading to lower standards and similar design influence across the country threatening the individuality of cathedrals." As it is the old sloping floor he wants to remove which makes Chester unique, that is a bit rich.

In his talk to the Friends of Chester Cathedral, Sims insisted that "designs by committee, however well informed, means mediocrity and a fear for the future". This is reminiscent of the paranoia of the egregious bearded Donald Buttress, surveyor to Westminster Abbey, who maintains that conservation legislation serves to inhibit the creativity of great artists like, er, Donald Buttress.

The fact is that Buttress and Sims are thoroughly mediocre and derivative themselves; all they have in common with great cathedral architects of the past, like Gilbert Scott, is arrogance.

Sims even dares to quote Pugin — "This Church is my own child — free from the Devil in the shape of a committee." But Pugin was talking of St Augustine's Ramsgate, which he both designed and paid for. Chester Cathedral, however, was not designed by Ronnie Sims — which is a mercy. Sims only got where he is by being the assistant to the previous cathedral architect, George Pace, whose idiosyncratic detailing he faithfully imitates. Pace was an arrogant meddler, but at least he was an architect with a mind and a style of his own. Sims is not so much a Pace clone as a diluted Pace — yet he now dares to get rid of the nave stalls that Pace introduced in 1966 and in which he incorporated 17th century woodwork. There's gratitude for you.

In his "discussion document" for briefing the wretched Sims, Canon Conway of the Chester Cathedral chapter writes that "I believe that we should approach this radically for the future, but with a sympathetic eye for the surroundings that have been there for hundreds of years. At least we aren't considering using the nave space for a market — or are we?!!" Well, Canon Conway, perhaps you are.

'Piloti'

He was rowed down from the north in a leather skiff manned by a crew of trolls. His fur cape was caked with candle wax, his brow stained blue by wine — though the latter was seldom noticed due to the fox mask he wore at all times. A quill in his teeth, a solitary teardrop a-squirm in his palm, he was the young poet prince of Montreal, handsome, immaculate, looking for sturdier doors to nail his poignant verses on.

TOM ROBBINS
Sleevenotes to 'Tower Of Song: The Songs of Leonard Cohen'

Pseuds Corner

Before And After
— The best new ideas for improving the quality of dying and for inexpensive green, family-organised funerals.

Natural Death Centre Awards
Descriptions of green 'd-i-y' funerals transcending a malfunction in consciousness, tips for those dying at home, coffins as bookcases, an Internet Garden of Remembrance, shoulder-bag coffins.

Leaflet for Natural Death Centre

Autumn is the most self-possessed season, when the wind blows and one year's leaves are scattered to the ground. To the English, at least, it is an Elgaresque period: finely composed, with all the smells of a season turning, it is the time when the land is measured by a shadow's length. Spring, while piquant, is often insubstantial; summer, while languid, has no clear thesis, and winter simply lacks compassion. Autumn's moments, by obvious contrast, are always mature and deftly drawn.

Times leader

This is an addictive society in general. Credit cards are another of our groaning fixes. Hold your card to eye level and look at it lengthways. You see a thin white line. The credit card is that most legitimate of drugs: the speed that makes late capitalism run.

PAT KANE
Guardian

My fashion antennae are too finely tuned. My sleep is disturbed by seismic style eruptions on the other side of the planet, in different time zones. The Japanese wake me up at all hours, excitable little rascals. Hysteric Glamour are the worst, but the signals can come from any direction, affecting my speech and behaviour before I can even register their arrivals: Xuly Bet cuts himself shaving, and I start cursing in French. Anna Sui buys a packet of sequins and next thing I know I'm walking down the street with a mirrorball on my head.

ALIX HARKEY
Independent Magazine

...egoic interference is minimal, the poet wills himself to disappear into his text. The fate of this degraded, fought-over, misrepresented landscape, between the nexus of railway stations and the loop of the canal, is what concerns the poet; publication, achieved after twenty years of struggle, he saw as merely inevitable. The book had to succeed. It wasn't his work, it was the present articulation of an ineradicable benediction: an incarnation of the numinous on the ground of the city.

IAIN SINCLAIR
London Review of Boos

It is a voice raked by the claws of Cupid, a voice rubbed raw by the philosopher's stone. A voice marinated in kirschwasser, sulfur, deer musk and snow, bandaged with sackcloth from a ruined monastery, warmed by the embers left down near the river after the gypsies have gone. It is a penitent's voice, a rabbinical voice, a crust of unleavened vocal toast. He has a voice like a carpet in an old hotel, like a bad itch on the hunchback of love.

TOM ROBBINS
Sleevenotes to 'Tower Of Song: The Songs of Leonard Cohen'

CONTRIBUTORS: Ian Shuttleworth, Anon, S. Haum, 'J.E.S.', S. Barry, M. Carlson.

£10 paid for entries

TV

The Bill
(ITV)

YOU KNOW you've been writing about telly for a long time when the policemen start getting older. The Bill, ITV's pig soap, has now been around for 11 years, has lived to see its creator Thames taken over by Carlton and last week underwent its third change of format.

Having started as one-hours in batches of 12 or 13 and switched, seven years ago, to self-contained half-hour episodes twice a week, it has now reacted to the current ratings siege on the soap opera patch by coming out shooting with three episodes a week and trying out a *Cracker*-style thriller trilogy beginning the story with the Friday episode and running it through the following Tuesday and Thursday.

It's a brave show that risks a character called PC Tosh Lines, but the lines given to the PCs in *The Bill* turned out to have a surprisingly low tosh quotient. People have occasionally said that, if Shakespeare were alive today, he would be writing *Coronation Street*, but this big *Bill* three-parter actually was written by Dumas, or, anyway, Edward Canfor-Dumas. His script was efficiently constructed around familiar bits of Cockney copper slang: "What's his MO?" "Ere's the ballistics, guv", "What's yer snout saying on this one?" The only obvious unreality, in this pre-watershed series, is that the bad guys are coyly referred to as "toe-rags".

The Bill's opening credits still show two pairs of Plod feet on the beat, *Dixon*-style, but Dumas's trilogy was all flak-jackets, guns and safe-houses. An innocent woman was shot in the street, it subsequently becoming clear that WPC Ackland, out on the beat at the time, was the intended victim. She was being stalked by a cop-killer. Two scenes — one in the second episode, one in the third — demonstrated the strengths of the show.

In the first, the WPC was required to list all those who might have a grudge against her: toerags she'd sent down, ex-lovers. Apart from its dramatic power — the indignity of the personal revelations — it was a clever device, in a story designed to bring in new viewers, for establishing some of the back-story of the characters.

This was particularly impressive as, in most soap operas these days, the characters suffer from total amnesia about their past relationships, being friendly one day to people who killed three of their children a year before. Later, when the WPC went out on to the streets as bait for her stalker, there was a genuine sense of tension and camaraderie among the coppers seeing her off, which only comes from actors/characters with years of inter-action between them.

Plot matters more and more because, if *The Bill* has a serious problem, it's that it has never adequately replaced DCI Ellison, its first Dirty Den-like superstar. Of the long-service regulars, Sgt Cryer is just too *Dock Green* and Tosh too physically hideous.

If Square Eyes sounds in unusually mellow mood, don't worry: there's a malicious point to all this. Firstly, *The Bill* is a reminder of just how superior Thames was to Carlton as an ITV company and why the present government wants banging up for the last franchise blag it pulled. Secondly, it has to be said that the very credibility of *The Bill* makes its own point about the prevailing tendencies in popular television drama. Because of increased competition for viewers, almost every soap opera is now blighted by a round of shootings and sieges. *Brookside*, for example, a series set in a quiet Scouse close, has seen three armed stake-outs in as many years. The Merseyside SWAT squad now gets special discount at the local corner shop.

The Bill, though, is the one soap in which such plot developments are logical and even socially realistic. Shooters and sieges arise naturally from the territory. So it's the one television drama where ratings-chasing injections of violence and terror can easily be swept under the carpet. With this built-in insurance against the hysterics afflicting most, we're going to be around to see the policemen getting really old.

'Square Eyes'

"Don't just sit there – do somebody!"

MEDIA NEWS

JOHN BIRT has been telling close friends he is about to be offered an incredibly exciting new job... No 2 to Rupert Murdoch.

Can this really be true? It would certainly explain a great deal of Birt's behaviour at the BBC over the past few years.

LABOUR's crass browbeating of the BBC to run Tony Blair's conference speech ahead of the O.J. Simpson verdict on the TV news backfired badly.

The debacle was instigated, not surprisingly, by Peter "The Godfather" Mandelson, spin-doctor-in-chief, and his side-kick Alastair "Right Cross" Campbell, Blair's press secretary.

When Mandelson heard the O.J. verdict was going to be announced on the same day as his leader's speech, he called an impromptu meeting with Joy Johnson, the party's communications director, and Campbell, and suggested the letter to John Birt. "Don't do it," implored Johnson. "It will confirm everyone's worst fears and prejudices that we are trying to bully broadcasters." Mandelson ignored her and Campbell wrote a blustering, threatening letter. Johnson was furious and resigned. Blair himself had to persuade her to return.

Meanwhile at the Beeb the hacks were inundated with panicky e-mails from editors. *Today* programme staff were ordered to keep a log of all "lobbying-pressurising phone calls" from party officials, and *World At One*'s team was told to "keep tabs on each and every contact with the parties, rather as we do during elections".

Rebellious Beeb employees, already drowning under mountains of internal market paperwork, were slow to comply. So *World at One* boss Kevin Marsh stridently told the workers that there are political log forms to fill in every time they have any contact with political parties. "Think of it this way," he cheerily concluded. "Without the info we can't nab these bastards."

EYE TOLD YOU SO

WITHOUT even waiting for the government white paper on the BBC, John Birt's senior henchmen are already drawing up plans to privatise parts of the corporation.

Giles Coode-Adams, managing director of corporate finance at Lehman Brothers International, has been secretly commissioned to draw up a report "estimating the likely value of the BBC's Transmission Network, were it to be sold, in whole or in part".

P. Eye 1.7.94

Memo shows corporation preparing 'nimble footwork' to justify transmitter sale

BBC privatisation begins

Indie on Sunday 16.10.95

'animal hospital
IF YOU WANT TO GET THE WHOLE COUNTRY WATCHING...
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS GET ANY OLD LAME FURRY CREATURE...
THAT MAKES A FUNNY NOISE...
NEUTERED
AND PUT HIM IN SOMETHING WITH A LOT OF ANIMALS!
OWNER - T. BLAIR
Ken Pyne

HACKWATCH: JOHN LYTTLE

THE little clique of bores from *Marxism Today* who now run the *Independent* are indistinguishable from executives on any other newspaper — middle-aged men in suits, lumbered with wives and mortgages, who are only truly happy when attending meetings and writing memos.

But this is not how they see themselves. In their desperation to prove that they are streetwise gunslingers at heart, they are suckers for any half-plausible hack who claims to know about rave parties, ecstasy and all the other paraphernalia of "yoof culture".

Hence the rise and rise of John Lyttle. Until a year or so ago, he was a lowly functionary on the TV listings page. But then Charlie "Deadbeat" Leadbeater, who edits the *Indie*'s Section Two, discovered that Lyttle was part of the "gay scene". In the twinkling of an eye Lyttle was given his own weekly column, complete with huge picture by-line.

Although the column was meant to attract gay readers, its effect has been just the opposite: if the *Indie* had set out to prove that homosexuals were petty, bitchy, tunnel-visioned egotists whose horizons extended no further than taking amyl nitrate and cruising around discos eyeing up the talent, it could hardly have chosen a better man for the job...

19 May: Lyttle and his boyfriend visit a shop called Rob of London — "heavy metal, heavy duty for the S&M crowd: butt plugs and douches, fully studded masks, collars and restraints, crotchless leotards, nipple grippers, harnesses to hang in... My lover is over by the posing pouches. He's together, purposeful even, examining a snap-off codpiece and penis ring arrangement... 'What do you think?' Decisions, decisions. 'The codpiece.' 'Why?' 'Looks better. Easier access.' "

2 June: Lyttle is beginning to worry about "my identity as a gay man". In the old days, he could spot another same-sexer a mile off: "It was the cut of the hair, the gleam of the gel, the lurking presence of toner, moisturiser and aftershave that wasn't the great smell of Brut, the way faded jeans had been shrunk so tight they were taking the blood pressure of the gym-built body." Now, however, half the gay-looking men he chats up turn out to be heterosexuals — leaving him "to go home and cosy up with my video copy of *The Young and the Hung*". It is, he whines, "not fair".

9 June: Scientists claim to have located a "gay gene", but Lyttle doesn't give a monkey's. "Everyone seems fixated on why homosexuals are homosexuals except this homosexual... So what can I tell you? I can tell you I'm gay because the money's great and the hours are your own." Oh, and it allows him to be rampagingly promiscuous: he boasts that he has "lost count" of the number of men he's slept with.

30 June: Lyttle is telephoned by John, one of his lovers. " 'How's the gym?' John asks... I prod my hard stomach, examine the new knots of muscle in my legs and arms: 'I have a butt so tight you could flip dimes on it.' 'I could be round in half an hour with some change.' "

7 July: Lyttle is infuriated by the stupidity of other people: drugs and dancing, he laments, have replaced serious debate and discussion. "Mindlessness is no longer considered something sad, to be ignored or, indeed, be even mildly embarrassed about. On the contrary, it's a fashion statement." He should know.

14 July: "Saturday, the wee small hours, London's Fridge club... Men with waxed backs dance with beautiful boys with pierced nipples and popper bottles glued to their snub noses... The music's too demanding, too incessant for contemplation, the strobe lights and lasers and press of flesh too distracting for thought. Dance dance dance the latest dance; trance in your pants." Does he complain about the lack of serious debate? Er, no. His only concern is whether the songs on the Blondie Remix album are as good as the originals. "As I hit that perfect beat, I get it... So I pull out my poppers, move to the remix..."

21 July: After ogling a man on a tube train, Lyttle ruminates on the pleasure of seducing complete strangers: "Cruising was anticipation, limitless opportunity, eternally exciting... The supermarket. Him. Over there. Next to the oranges, rough hands on his buckle belt, legs apart, midnight cowboy posing. Is he the one? Score. Game over. Please try again."

28 July: In bed with his friend John, Lyttle is horrified to find that he can't "get it up". What to do? "I should apologise sincerely, cuddle or snuggle as required, fake being an adult — faking orgasm is clearly out of the question — and tell him: 'Yes. I am tired. I'm tired all the time. But the thing is, I don't particularly want to be a permanently pumped-up, ever-ready, multiple-partner, hard-core porno fantasy.' " Quite so.

11 August: "Do you have what it takes to be gay?" Lyttle advises his readers to think carefully before taking the plunge. "Heterosexuals jump out of bed in the morning and they're, like, straight, and no one cares if you haven't polished your nipple rings for a week." Homosexuals, by contrast, have to "dance to Kylie remixes, sleep with strangers (*perfect* strangers, fortunately) and know the five best places in London to have emergency liposuction." They also "go clubbing almost every night" and spend a fortune on "recreational drugs, Bette Davis videos and that monthly gallon of amyl nitrate".

18 August: Lyttle is accosted by a man who is fed up with his implication that gays are only interested in muscles, clothes, skincare products and drugs. The columnist shrugs off the suggestion that he ought to avoid perpetuating tired old stereotypes: "I cannot be representative of all things faggot and, moreover, don't want to be." So why does he go on about it all the time?

8 September: Once more into the disco, this time with his chum Paul: "He has spent the evening dancing to techno techno techno, keeping his arms rigid and waving them up and down — which means either he has been inhaling the Real Thing again or his nail varnish is taking a *very* long time to dry." Between dances, Paul and John brood on the fact that some of the most enjoyable features of the gay scene were pioneered by heterosexuals: "They discovered Rave (more exciting than High Energy) and E (more exciting than poppers)..."

15 September: Lyttle has split up with Nicholas, another of his lovers. "My problem: I find separating love from sex almost impossible. That doesn't make me a better person, but it does make me a very poor gay man. Nicholas is a better gay man than me: nowadays he thinks he can divide flesh from feeling."

22 September: How can Lyttle recover from the split with Nicholas? Simple: go to the disco and take lots of drugs. "I feel everything. The dark, the lights, the men, the music... Not since I was a teenager have I felt such a sharp need to belong and THISVERYMINUTE, as this guy, this clean-cut, hippy dippy, peerlessly happy stranger with pec implants and child-bearing lips lays his hands on my waist and whispers in my ear DONTTALKTOMEABOUTLOVE I suspect, no, I know that... unity is a one-night stand."

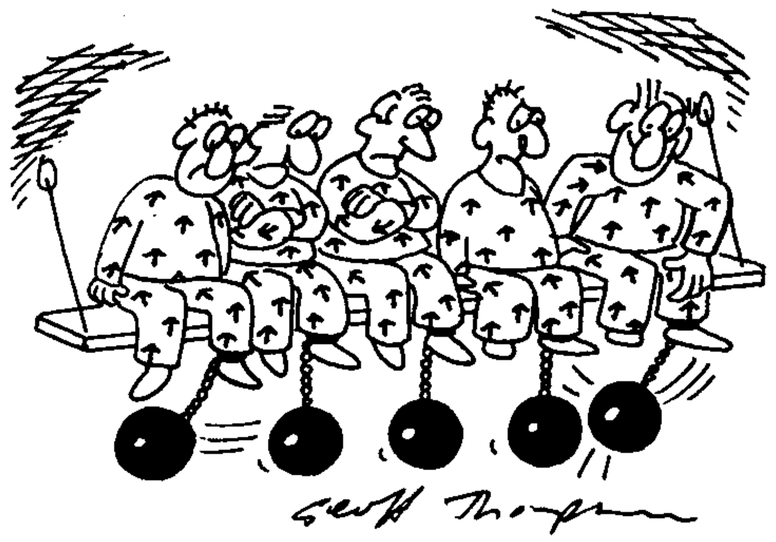
13 October: Lyttle has been interviewing Eric Smith, the anti-gay lord mayor of Belfast, for a BBC TV programme. "All I can think is homophobes must be the only people more obsessed with homosexuality than homosexuals... Eric is the homophobic equivalent of a screaming queen: not to be taken too seriously." But with homosexuals like Lyttle, who needs homophobes?

BIRTSPEAK has been extended to cover Management Drivel in *all* spheres (not just the BBC). *£10 paid for examples.*

"Soft Issues/Culture" Issue Group

After the recent paper amnesty day, a number of people have commented to Brin that we ought to change our practices within the projects to prevent the build up of paperwork again. In the LRT IDT I was asked to put this on to our issues list and assign it to an issue group... Brin also took an action to call a meeting of all TGM's in the next 3 weeks to discuss the issue. I feel that this session would need to be carefully planned and facilitated to use the time of such a group effectively. Possibly an idea generation against a problem statement would be appropriate.

— Memo: British Aerospace Defence Dynamics, Herts. (Sent in by A. Spy.)



EXECUTIVE TOY

Private I-I-I!

THIS ISSUE'S rundown of the nation's most self-obsessed columnists, based on the number of incidences of the word "I" per column-inch.

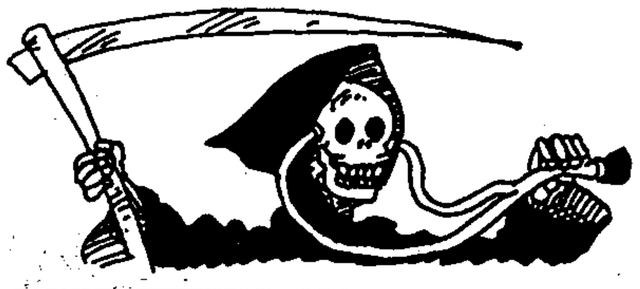
		Ego Rating
1	Rufus Sewell (Mail 7/10)	4.30*
2	Linda Evangelista (S. Times 15/10)	3.75
3	Zöe Heller (S. Times 15/10)	2.43
4	John Lyttle (Independent 13/10)	2.17
5	Julie Myserson (Independent 9/10)	2.00
6	Michael Winner (S. Times 15/10)	1.81
7	Andrew Malone (S. Times 8/10)	1.80
8	Theodore Dalrymple (S. Times 15/10)	1.56
9	Jo Brand (Independent 7/10)	1.50
10	Michael Bywater (IoS 15/10)	1.37

**New record*

Special Family L-I-I-I-fe Award goes to "Dr" John Diamond.

Column inches = 21. Mentions of self = 26. Mentions of person who recognised him at Kings Cross station = 1. Mentions of his producer = 1. Mentions of daughter = 9.

HUSBAND



DOING THE ROUNDS

THE Kings Fund's accreditation scheme of "essential practice standards" has now been used to scrutinise 50 hospitals, each of which paid up to £22,000 for the privilege.

The aim was to use it as a "valuable marketing tool" to attract potential purchasers. Unfortunately only one NHS hospital (**Belfast's Green Park Healthcare trust**) has achieved the top rating. Even with accreditation, the trust may not attract extra custom as purchasing money seems in short supply in the city.

Sir George Quigley, chair of Belfast's royal group of hospitals, has accused the government of "threatening the success of the reforms through underfunding". Sir George has been ordered to reduce the charge for his trust's contract with Eastern health and social services board by £4.5 million.

● JOHN SPIERS is taking over the chair of the **Patients Association**. Mr Spiers, who resigned from his previous chair at **Brighton healthcare trust** after a vote of no-confidence from the consultants (*Eyes passim*), sees himself as "a self-styled people's champion". Those who have experienced his confrontational management style may wonder which people he is trying to champion.

● DOUGLAS Lindsay has resigned as finance director of the flagship **Aberdeen royal hospitals trust** which is heading for a £2 million deficit. The trust has been given a month by Scottish NHS chief executive Geoff Scaife to come up with an "externally validated recovery plan", but quite who is going to come up with it is unclear. **Highland Communities trust** is also down by £1.8 million and has announced 45 job losses as a remedy.

● A REPORT by **Manchester health commission** has found that the city's health lags 10 years behind the national average, with men 71 percent more likely to die from heart disease. The same commission has frozen spending on non-emergency extra-contractual referrals for seven months to claw back a £1 million debt.

Berkshire health commission has already outlawed tummy tucks, sex changes and wisdom teeth extraction as from 1996, and varicose veins, grommet insertions, womb scrapes for women under 40 and other procedures deemed to be "of doubtful clinical value" may soon follow. If grommet insertions are indeed useless, why did the Labour party pin its entire health offensive at the last election on Jennifer Bennet's ear?

● "IT WOULD be difficult for me to justify the same basic rise in the future." So said a gracious Brian Websdell, chief executive of **Ipswich hospital's trust**, in response to his 22 percent pay hike to £72,000. Other winners include Hilary Pepper, CE of **North Mersey community trust** (up 24 percent to £57,000); Charles "Popular" Marshall, **Londons UCLH** leader (up 16 percent to £88,000); and Dr Sandy Bradbrook, chief of **Wigan and Leigh NHS trust** (up 12 percent to £83,000). Dr Bradbrook's increase was in part related to his performance in closing **Astley hospital** and **Leigh's casualty department** against the wishes of 65,000 residents.

The largest increase thus far appears to have been reserved for Jeremy Taylor, king of **Grampian healthcare trust** — up 31 percent to £101,000. As Mr Taylor modestly put it: "Staff in the health service think people should get what they deserve. I have." The 200 trust workers who lost their jobs in the last year might disagree.

● ONE unhappy manager is David Smart, recently central services manager at **Bristol's Frenchay trust** but now suspended and bailed until 1996 over allegations of fraudulent contracts with a computer firm, Boulton Stone Ltd.

● THE brand new **Solihull hospital** may soon be treating its last patient (*Eyes passim*) — but the catering department is thriving and attracting customers from all over the West Midlands. As one of my patients put it: "Its marvellous value at only £5.99 for a meal for two. Twelve of us went there for my birthday outing. Afterwards, we wandered round the corridors and poked our noses into all the departments and no-one seemed to mind."

M.D.

"Hey! Worried about the cost of residential care for the elderly? Perhaps I can help..."

DOWN ON THE FARM

ALL but invisible since his appointment as agriculture minister, Douglas "Piggy" Hogg has at last trotted briefly into the limelight to promise the Tory conference that deregulation for the farming industry would be a "top priority".

Pre-empting Michael Portillo's crude jingoism and tapping the nascent Euro-hatred in the conference hall, he told delegates he was tired — but presumably not emotional — of seeing Britain "first in the queue" to impose Euro red tape.

Predictably Hogg refrained from detailing his latest "triumph" in Brussels, however. At the last council of ministers meeting he voted against new EC measures which will force some 70,000 livestock producers to license their mixing plants, condemning the move as unnecessary and excessive. Needless to say he was outvoted, which means the measure will come into force. By next year, armed with yet more new regulations, his Maffia stormtroopers will march into farms which produce their own feed and put them out of business at the drop of a hat — much to the delight of the multi-national feed companies who have long complained about the competition.

Hogg maintains he will order officials to implement the law with "a light touch". But as many slaughterhouse owners know to their cost, the day has long since passed when officials took any notice of a mere minister.

Hogg in fact had another reason to keep quiet about his "success": only three weeks ago Michael Heseltine launched another "deregulation" initiative, claiming that 250 businesses licences would be reviewed and removed where possible.

NOT that Piggy needs Brussels to help him screw up Tarzan's deregulation: in another move to "cut" red tape his officials have issued proposals that actually *increase* controls on the small but thriving sector of the agricultural industry that produces chemicals called adjuvants.

These products, many developed by farmers for farmers, are added to pesticides and herbicides and improve their performance considerably. They enable environmentally responsible growers to reduce the amounts of poisons they put on the land, and they annoy the poison producers.

Because adjuvants are themselves relatively harmless, they have — until now — benefited from a relatively light regulatory regime of which Hogg would undoubtedly claim to approve. But with less than 14 days' notice producers have been told that new, complex rules are to be imposed. Compliance will now become so difficult it will be all but impossible to produce and market these benign chemicals. The result will be a massive increase in the poisons sprayed on the land, and massively increased costs. This will delight the poison producers, who will take an even greater share of the subsidy cake.

WHILE Hogg giveth with one hand to the chemical companies he taketh away with the other — from their pharmaceutical associates.

New EC rules on animal medicines are implemented by the Maffia's cousin, the veterinary medicines directorate. And the rules, says the chief executive of the biotech company Zeneca, are wiping hundreds of medicines off the approved list and cutting hard into profit potential.

Figures from the British Veterinary Association show that in December 1994 there were 2,733 veterinary products under review by the VMD, of which 1,770 did not justify the financial investment needed to comply with the new rules governing these products. This leaves just 953 products, some of which will also not be licensed.

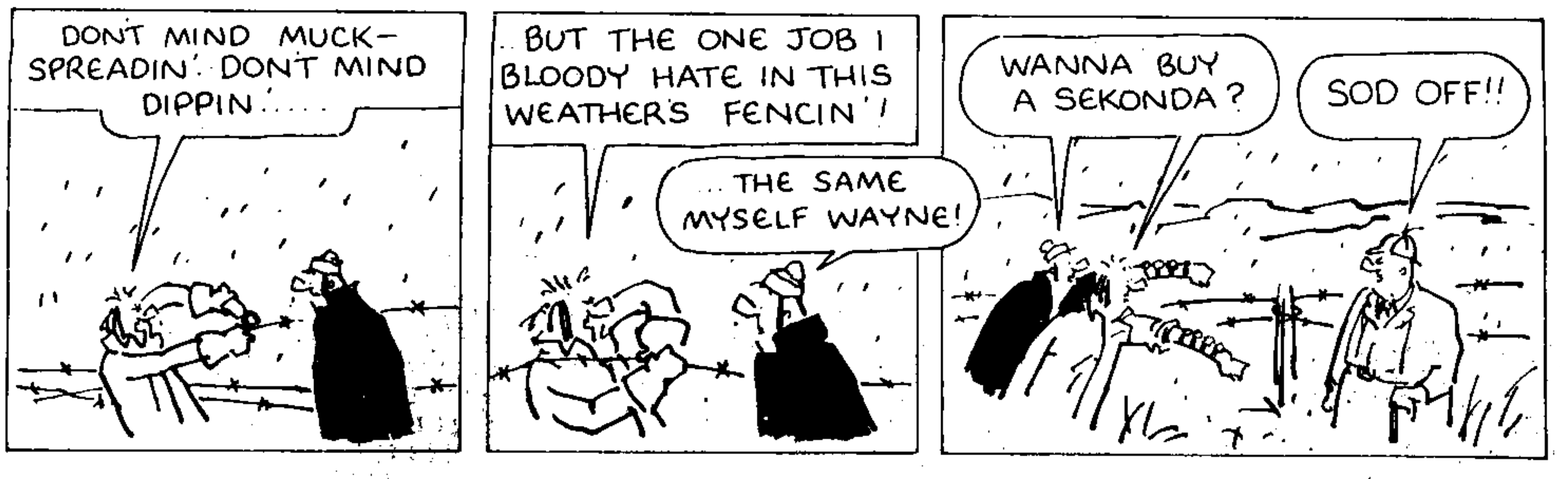
So severe are the new rules — which require massive research to establish what are called "maximum residue levels" — ie, the amount of the medicine which will be left in the animal after treatment — that pharmaceutical companies are simply not prepared to spend on developing any new medicines.

Thus the first effects of Piggy Hogg's "deregulation" programme will be to reduce the number of medicines available to hard-pressed vets, who are finding it more and more difficult to treat sick animals, and to prevent new products reaching the market. But at least this is consistent: everybody is getting shafted.

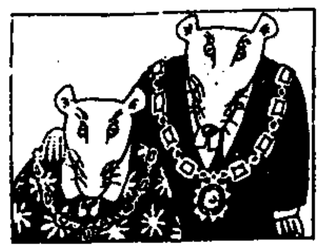
'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald

ALBERT


DONT MIND MUCK-SPREADIN'. DONT MIND DIPPIN'.....
..BUT THE ONE JOB I BLOODY HATE IN THIS WEATHERS FENCIN'!
...THE SAME MYSELF WAYNE!
WANNA BUY A SEKONDA?
SOD OFF!!

THE Rotten Borough Advertiser



WESTMINSTER DOUBLE WHAMMY

GERRYMANDERING Westminster's planning department is now in trouble with — of all people — environment secretary John Gummer over the future of a Georgian stretch of Baker Street.

A few years ago Richard Loftus, heir to the Accurist watch fortune and a former adviser to ex-leaderene Dame Shirley Porter, was given permission to redevelop (ie demolish) 16 Georgian houses at Baker Street's southern end. The decision, which was made against the wishes of officers and a directive previously issued by Michael Heseltine, when environment secretary in the eighties, drew howls of outrage from English Heritage and the Georgian Society.

When Loftus's relationship with Dame Shirley was disclosed, Gummer stepped in, stopped the demolition and ordered a public inquiry. Nevertheless the council was determined to push ahead with this wholescale butchering of a famous Georgian street — until Central Office Tories pointed out the implications.

Now, after years of flying in the face of public and professional opinion, Westminster has called a halt and withdrawn permission from the scheme. But the matter is unlikely to end there. The inquiry is set to go ahead and the council's own QC, Michael Barnes, who drew up a report into the Baker Street plans, is worried about links between Loftus and two senior Tories: ex-leader David Weeks and former councillor Andrew Greystoke, his old university chum.

The two were involved in granting the original planning permission and Barnes believes that "a significant non-pecuniary interest did arise" and that Greystoke played a "significant part in proceedings". Barnes has concluded that Greystoke's actions "constituted a substantial breach" of the code of conduct for councillors and that a "prima facie case of impropriety has been made out". Should be interesting to see how Westminster wriggles out of this one.

● MORE news of Martin Jiggens, a respectable Westminster chartered surveyor, Westminster Tory councillor and deputy lord mayor to boot, who was employed as a surveyor by local resident Christopher Story.

Jiggens first came to the *Eye*'s attention while acting for the chef Albert Roux, who had bought a Mayfair building as an office and found it only had planning permission for residential use. Jiggens, as chair of planning, steered his client's application for a change of use through personally, declaring his interest, of course.

Mr Story engaged Jiggens to look after several property matters. In one he was trying to claim a reduction in the rateable value of a property. A year after Story had given the case to Jiggens he has still heard nothing.

Jiggens insisted there was a "backlog" at the valuation office in Huddersfield. But when Mr Story finally approached the valuation office personally he found that Jiggens had never sent a report to the office, nor had he ever been in touch with the valuation officers there about the property.

Story also tried to get compensation after building works affected his office's air conditioning equipment. Over a year later, after he had heard nothing from Jiggens, he personally went to the residents who were carrying out the building work. They said that they, too, had written to Jiggens about the compensation matter but had received no reply.

Story had numerous other complaints of delayed work and eventually took his complaints against Westminster's deputy lord mayor to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. It has now investigated the complaints and added one of its own: that Jiggens failed to respond to the institute about the complaints.

The institute has now severely reprimanded Jiggens and suspended him for six months, giving him plenty of time to devote to the planning committee he chairs, where — hopefully — Westminster residents get a better deal than Mr Story.

RED FACE OF THE WEEK

TOWER Hamlets council's campaign against prostitution has been a cock-up.

Spearheading New Labour's moral crusade was Coun John Ryan, member for Limehouse ward. While investigating the subject on the streets, Coun Ryan thought he recognised the tightly clad outline of one of the fallen women plying her trade. On closer inspection, he saw that he did: it was none other than Gillian, his wife of six years.

Apparently Mrs Ryan charged punters extra because "my husband is a councillor". Now Ryan says he has been forced to resign by New Labour because "they don't understand the problems faced by working people".

PRESTON FRONT MAN

PRESTON's Labour leaders have got themselves into a real mess trying to get rid of chief executive Geoff Driver.

Driver was brought in to clean up the borough after a series of corrupt property deals now being investigated by Inspector Knacker as "Operation Angel".

The scam has already seen off the previous Labour regime and led to the dismissal of a number of Preston officers. But now Driver himself is suspended and Preston's Labour leader, former GLC wimmins chair Valerie "Olive Oyl" Wise, won't tell anyone – councillors, officers, taxpayers, hacks – why.

The *Eye*, however, has learnt that Wise is incensed with Driver's view that the current Labour regime can't be trusted to sift out municipal wrong-doing — not an unreasonable proposition, perhaps, given events in Lambeth, Hackney et al.

When Wise learnt in August that Driver had failed to keep her abreast of his latest findings she had one of her usual tantrums and ordered him out of the town hall, forcing him to take an extended holiday or face suspension from his £65,000 a year job. Then, when Driver tried to resign to force the issue, the Labour group rejected his application and tried to assuage its guilt by giving him a pay rise so he could retire with a nice pension!

The district auditor has warned Wise that her actions might be illegal. In the long run though the real losers will be the Preston taxpayer who will have to fork out at least £500,000 to pay for Driver's golden handshake: half a million to get rid of a man trying to get rid of corruption!

IN BRIEF

HACKNEY: Housing director Bernard Crofton, victimised by the council's African mafia for trying to expose recruitment fraud, won his appeal against dismissal only to face the sack again! The day after the hearing chief executive Tony Elliston drew up plans to retire Crofton due to "incompatibility". If he refuses, he'll be sacked anyway. Alan Moses, Crofton's QC, believes it illegal to force him out after he won his appeal and says councillors may be liable to surcharge for wasting public money — so far, £1 million and rising.

LAMBETH: The Appleby corruption inquiry has heard how a female town hall worker was shown a photo of a former male Lambeth chief executive dressed in black knickers, stockings and suspenders accompanied by a Lambeth director wearing a body-hugging lurex catsuit. The photo was an inducement to join the "fun" at a directorate Christmas party.

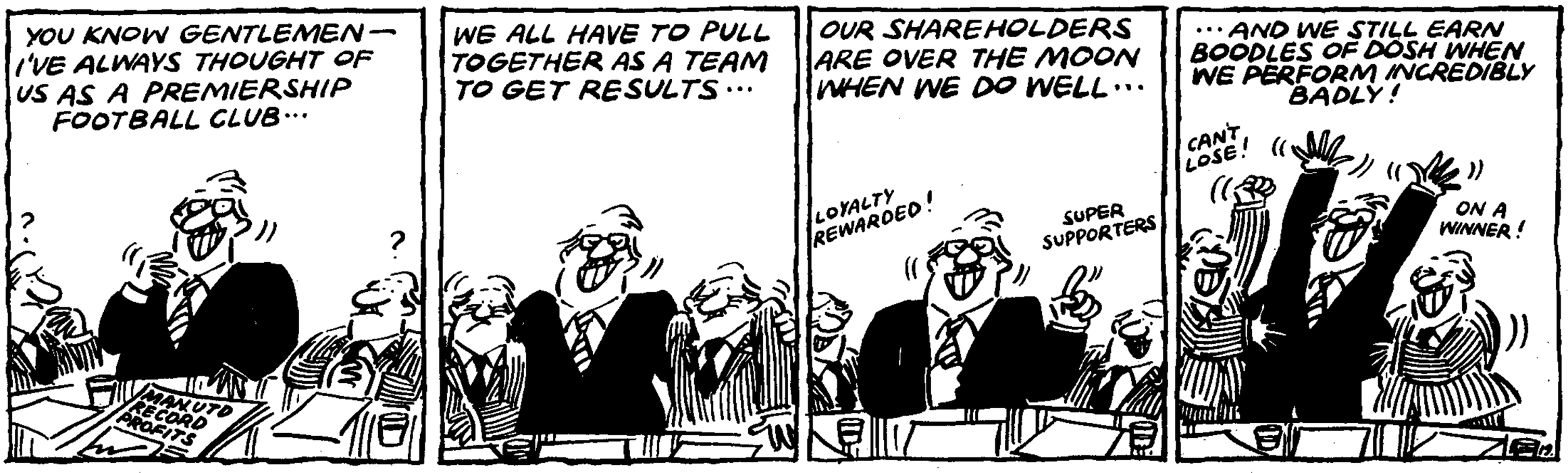
LEEDS: When the first 500 metres of the city's "guided bus" scheme were opened by transport minister Steven Norris, 100 VIPs were impressed by the electronic timetable installed on a smart new bus shelter. But the timetable, which counted down the time to the arrival of the next bus, was just for show and was removed after the ceremony. If the timetable was too good for ordinary punters, so was the shelter: yobs smashed it up within 48 hours.

TORY SITS. VAC.

ARE you a Tory councillor fed up with the mean attendance allowance? The department of transport may have just the lucrative quango job — as chair of the Central Rail User's Consultative Committee, representing consumers' rights. The post is being readvertised because the DoT failed to find the right candidate. Very suitable for true blue councillors, previous office holders include Angela Hooper, chair of the Southern England committee and a Tory councillor in Westminster; and Sir Robert Wall, chair of the committee for Western England and leader of the Tories at Bristol council.

THE DIRECTORS

DREDGE


YOU KNOW GENTLEMEN— I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF US AS A PREMIERSHIP FOOTBALL CLUB···
?
?
MAN UTD RECORD PROFITS
WE ALL HAVE TO PULL TOGETHER AS A TEAM TO GET RESULTS···
OUR SHAREHOLDERS ARE OVER THE MOON WHEN WE DO WELL···
LOYALTY REWARDED!
SUPER SUPPORTERS
···AND WE STILL EARN BOODLES OF DOSH WHEN WE PERFORM INCREDIBLY BADLY!
CAN'T LOSE!
ON A WINNER!

Letters

He only goes to sleep

Sir,

Deny it as he may (EYE 881), I can vouch for the fact that on the evening of 18 September at the Young Vic, the critic Sheridan Morley wholly emulated Bernard Shaw's maxim ("Sleep, Sir, is also a form of dramatic criticism; besides, I always wake up for the interval") by sleeping through most of the RSC's production of Henrik Ibsen's PEER GYNT. The performance began at 7.20pm, and by 7.40 Mr Morley — whose alertness quotient I was timing from one row away — had fallen into a deep and restful snooze. He awoke for the interval at 8.40, adjourned to the café/bar for a solitary drink and a read of his programme, and returned to his seat by 9.05 in good time for the second act and forty more winks.

The play lasted a long three-and-a-quarter hours and was admittedly pretty tedious; but the skaters Torville and Dean, who were also among the audience and being scrutinised by me, managed to stay earnestly attentive throughout. Perhaps they should take up dramatic criticism while Morley, if playgoing is such a soporific exertion for him, tries ice dancing.

I do grant, however, that for once it was a case of the audience being more interesting to watch than the play (though Sheridan Morley in fact did neither); and, re this particular production, Sheridan (via Bernard Shaw) may well have taken the proper and blameless line of least resistance. Would that I had dared to do the same, but my ticket cost me money while my distinguished fellow-playgoer's seat probably came gratis.

I look forward to reading Morley's review of the first 20 minutes of "Peer Gynt".

Yours faithfully,
HENRY DAVIS,
London N8.

(Morley liked it. Ed.)

Nut Bush

Sir,

Another EYE, another gratuitous poke at journalism's Pillsbury Doughboy Garry Bushell. You are nothing if not predictable. But I wonder if you were at the same Page Three shindig as me?

There was nothing vaguely Footlightsy in Bushy's routine. His chief preoccupations were female breasts and his own availability for Ugandan discussions with Page Three lovelies. Ho Hum.

Garry did have one good joke though. Talking about Bobby Brown's break-up with Whitney Houston, Bushy speculated that he probably broke it to her Apollo 13 style, ringing up and saying: "Houston we have a problem." Now that was funny.

Yours faithfully,
MARIE COLLINS,
Loughton, Essex.

Trial and error

Sir,

Does the following remind your readers of anything?

Some years ago, South African juries consisted of 9 white males. A local farmer, of good standing in the community, was being tried for the murder of one of his farm labourers. There were witnesses who had seen him beat the man to death with a rock.

After testimony in the Circuit Court, the jury returned a verdict of NOT GUILTY.

The judge was visibly horrified. "By what reason do you find this man not guilty?" he asked.

"By reason of temporary insanity," replied the jury foreman.

"What! All nine of you?", responded the judge.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES MARAIS,
Riverside, Connecticut, USA.

Lookalike

Gullit

Sheep

Sir,

Can these be the same people? Did I see Ruud Gullit when I was at a rare breed sheep farm at St Davids, Wales, recently?

NEAL PHILO,
Lancashire.

Left alone

Sir,

Many thanks for the mention in Hackwatch (EYE 882). I know that you love to keep alive the memory of my Trotskyist days, and I too enjoy these trips into that land of lost discontent. Your piece reminded me that, as York commissar, I used to expel people from the International Socialists for supporting the IRA. What fun it all was.

However, I left the IS in (I think) 1974, when Paul Foot still had black hair and Ian Hislop was doing his O levels. Since then I have had time to change my mind on quite a lot of subjects. What I now find interesting is that many of my contemporaries, who played on the fringes of the left, are still playing there. In many places, the ambitious young man or woman now finds it wise to adopt leftish opinions.

Meanwhile, having become what I once attacked, I am still a heretic, and still incorrect.

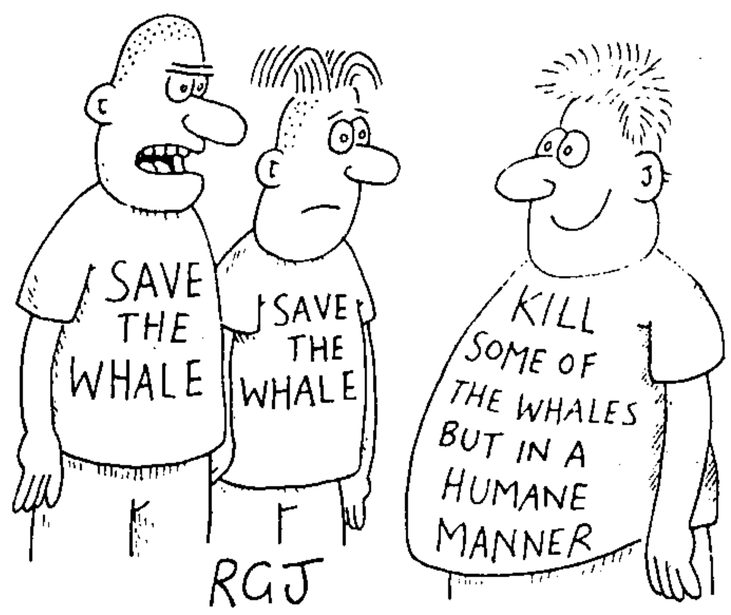
Yours faithfully,
PETER HITCHENS,
London SE1.

Indian takeaway

Sir,

I understand that Walt Disney's newly released film 'Pocahontas' tells the story of a gallant British gentleman who travels to America in search of conquest and riches, and who ends up in the arms of a lissome young lady. That said, I seem to reall you, many months ago, publishing a picture of a couple with similar credentials and I wonder if that picture was advance publicity material? Time has clouded my exact recollection of your picture and so, in order to clear this matter up in my mind, I would be grateful if you could reprint it.

Yours faithfully,
MIKE SHEPHERD,
Weston-super-Mare, Avon.



"Blairite!"

Barley moan

Sir,

Here I am in the NE of Scotland far from the problems of New Muckspreader's barley barons and your London veggies. It's almost the middle of October and I can hear the drone of the combine-harvester as my neighbour-farmer manfully tries to salvage something from another disaster of a wheat crop, the fifth in 11 years. At best, it will be fit only for feeding the cattle. Alas, also this year, after a week of torrential rain followed by warmth, the barley heads started to sprout rendering them unfit to malt for whisky. Most of the barley crop was fit only for cattle feed.

However, it does mean that the farmer will be able to over winter a few more cattle and sheep to help reduce a little of his losses. Thankfully, in this part of the world at least, we have been eating a mixed diet and listening to songbirds for over 10,000 years. I have a gut feeling that it's going to be a very long time before we develop a stomach with four compartments and start chewing the cud.

Yours faithfully,
DR J.F. TAYLOR,
Rhynie, Aberdeenshire.

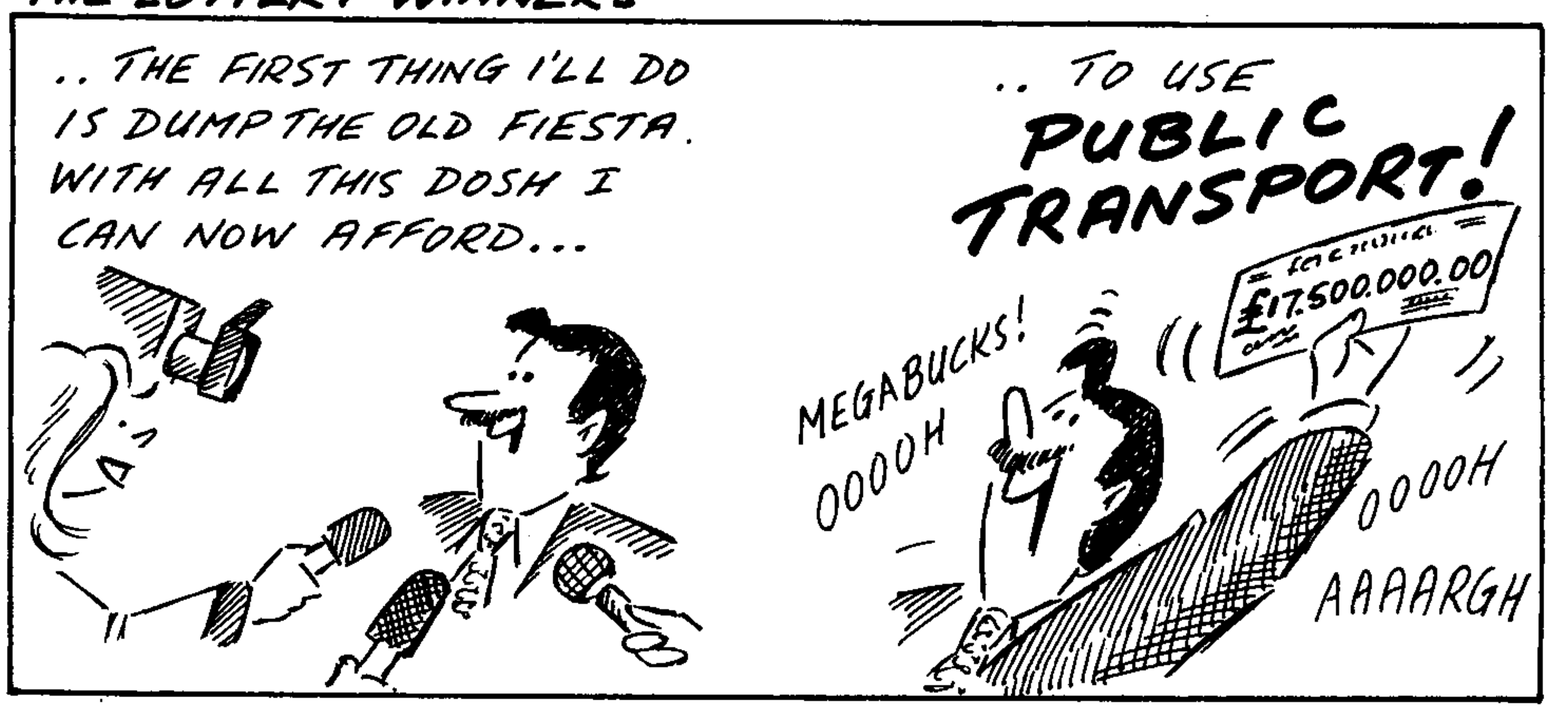
Explosive issue

Sir,

I refer you to the recent French nuclear tests and the impending propensity of the volcanic Mount Ruapehu to blow herself apart in New Zealand's North Island. Are they by any chance related?

Yours faithfully,
MR J. ALLEN,
Newcastle upon Tyne.

MIKE TURNER


THE LOTTERY WINNERS
.. THE FIRST THING I'LL DO IS DUMP THE OLD FIESTA. WITH ALL THIS DOSH I CAN NOW AFFORD...
.. TO USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT!
£17,500,000.00
MEGABUCKS!
OOOOH
OOOOH
AAAARGH

Rescue bids

Sir,

Roger G. Ale's letter in the last EYE *about the English channel rescue services around the Kent coast is disingenuous to say the least.*

The RAF service was closed down by Jonathan Aitken to make savings on the defence budget. There was no question of it being replaced at the time by a civilian equivalent, or indeed of it being privatised. The view was taken that anyone who needed rescuing from the seas around Kent would be served equally well by a service based over a hundred miles away.

EYE *hacks, merchant seamen, windsurfers, children on lilos and others who get in difficulty do not care what the rescuers are wearing, only that they will be rescued quickly. The military were given this job under the Wislon government because they were deemed to be the best at it, and because they were on the spot.*

Aitken's campaigning on this issue obviously takes the form of self-effacing behind-the-scenes lobbying among his many ministerial contacts, using the sword of truth and justice, and avoiding contact with the media like the plague.

Ale's campaigning on this issue has by his own admission been unsuccessful — a tribute to the influence that he actually has within his party. To have supported closure of the military service before the civilian equivalent was put in place, in what is one of the busiest and most hazardous shipping lanes in the world, is... er... er... er... irresponsible? Slavishly following a party line? Or what?

NORMAN WHITFIELD,
Dover.

Foot quotes

Sir,

Re: Footnotes, The Things They Say, EYE *881. As the Windscale fire in 1957 can hardly be said to have been during the last 30 years, Dr Hawley cannot fairly be accused of forgetting it in the statement Foot quotes. The real question is, then, what happened in the early 60s that Dr Hawley remembers and that we don't know about — yet?*

Yours etc,
CLARE SMEDLEY,
Brussels.

O·B·N

Years ago when the Thatchers lived in Flood Street, Chelsea, I was walking from a greengrocer's shop when I saw Margaret Thatcher rushing towards me trying to catch the greengrocer before he closed. "Don't rush," I said, "he is outside waiting for you."

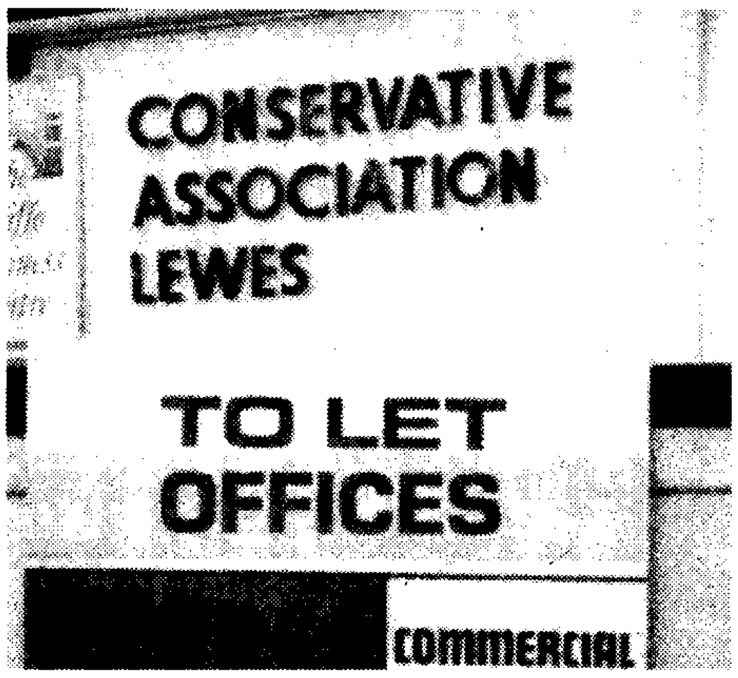
She had been at the House of Commons all day and had returned to cook dinner for the family. What a woman.

DOROTHY WARREN
Letter to the Evening Standard

Submitted by Garry P. High.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

I-SPY



Submitted by Michael Dawes. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Nature rambling

Sir,

Could the "young hope" Justin Hinchcliffe reported in the DAILY TORYGRAPH, *wanting to address the Tory party conference, be the same Justin Hinchcliffe who said about the homeless in London "they can catch salmon in the Thames and eat berries from Epping Forest". I think we should be told.*

T. LOSCOMBE,
Harrow.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"They [Rosenborg] have won 66 games, and they've scored in all of them."
BRIAN MOORE, ITV
(Dan Jones)

"If you can't stand the heat in the dressing-room, get out of the kitchen."
TERRY VENABLES, Capital Gold
(Desmond Jones)

"The Indian meal is firmly embedded in the English conscience."
LLOYD GROSSMAN, BBC2
(B. Williams)

"There is a lot of water under the bridge yet to come."
JIMMY LINDLEY, BBC1
(David Parkinson)

Caller: *In my job as a pollution officer I get paid £8 to £10 each time I get called out at night.*
Sean Bolger: *I see. So how much do you get paid, then?*
Caller: *How do you mean?*
Bolger: *If you're called out during the night...*
Talk Radio UK
(Paul Morris)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

NEVER MIND THE SACRED COWS, LETS GET ELECTED..
NEW SPARTACUS PARTY
WILD CHEERS
.. ONLY THEN CAN WE DO THE THINGS THAT REALLY MATTER TO US.
NEW SPARTACUS PARTY
EXPECTANT HUSH
GET CUSHY JOBS EAT FREE LUNCHES. GO ON FREEBIES..
NEW SPARTACUS PARTY
MORE WILD CHEERS

Letter from the UN

from Our Own Correspondent

YASUSHI Akashi, the UN protection force's exponent of Zen in the face of genocide, is being relieved of his duties in Bosnia. He has a distinguished track record.

In Cambodia he identified the most vicious and bloodthirsty party, the Khmer Rouge, and bowed to them, allowing them to renege on every aspect of the settlement. They are still armed, still murderous and run half the country — despite the big success of the UN operation. Arriving in Bosnia, Akashi identified the Serbs as soul mates of the Khmer Rouge and allowed them the same licence.

Meanwhile President Bill Clinton's envoy Richard Holbrooke has to make his Bosnian peace settlement stick. This means presenting the Bosnian Serb war criminals in Pale as respectable negotiating partners, and making Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and Franjo Tudjman of Croatia acceptable as peacemakers (rather than as known warmongers).

Clinton's problem remains how to win an election while handing over half of Bosnia to Serbs who have committed genocide, rape, ethnic cleansing, run concentration camps, shelled civilians and taken UN troops hostage and are committing outrages right up to the ceasefire itself. The answer, of course, is the Owen evasion.

Ever since Dr Death decided civilization was best served by helping the Serbs carve up Bosnia, western politicians have excused their inaction by referring to all sides as being equals in moral turpitude, impelled by "ancient ethnic hatreds" and similar killer clichés.

In 1993, when Warren Christopher used this excuse to explain Clinton's betrayal of his earlier support for the Bosnians, his assistant secretary for human rights reminded him that only 6 per cent of all reported incidents in Bosnia blamed the Muslims — and that none of those indicated any involvement by the central Bosnian authorities in the crime.

The UN's own investigative commission reported in 1994 that "Bosnian government forces have also committed the same types of grave breaches of the Geneva convention against Serbs and Croats, but not as part of a policy of ethnic cleansing. The number of these violations, as reported, is significantly less than the reported violations allegedly committed by the other warring factions."

Human rights monitors estimate that the graves of Bosnia are filled with some 200,000 victims of the Serb forces. Some 6,000 missing Bosnians are unlikely ever to drive out of the mass graves of Srebrenica; and some 10,000 Sarajevans killed in the daily shelling and sniping are unlikely to vote in the free and democratic elections promised by Holbrooke's plan.

It would be misleading to identify the victims purely by their religion, since Milosevic's men have pursued an equal opportunities programme in the killing fields. When the Yugoslav army opened the campaign in Croatia by shelling Vukovar into rubble, half its citizens were Serbs.

In a way, living happily with their Croat and Muslim neighbours made them even more "killable"; but it was assumed that the 200 patients the Yugoslav Serbs took out of the hospital there, slaughtered and then buried in a mass grave identified by the UN, were probably Croats. Even now in Sarajevo some 20,000 ethnic Serbs have been at the receiving end of Orthodox civilization for the three years of the siege.

Of course one could say the Bosnians are not displaying a higher morality, it's just that they don't have the weapons with which to massacre and commit mayhem like their opponents. But the fact remains that Bosnian controlled territory still contains many Croats and Serbs, while the Croat and Serb authorities have cleared out or killed everyone who is not one of their own. In the Bosnian areas, Orthodox and Catholics remain. In the Croat and Serb areas, hundreds of mosques and churches have mostly gone the way of their former worshippers.

All sides may indeed be guilty, but Serb leaders are a hell of a lot guiltier than the Croats, while Muslims and their allies are statistically the least guilty of all.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

O "This was too disgusting even for me, and I like disgusting things," Wang Mo-Lin confessed to reporters at a news conference in Panchiao, after the town's *Broken Life Festival* had ended amid scenes of violence and disarray. "Frankly, what was supposed to be a serious concert of alternative music was treated by most of the groups as an opportunity to cause trouble."

Wang, the director of Taiwan's *Body Phase Studio* performance art troupe, explained how the evening had degenerated into chaos: "First, the leader of the Swiss group *Schimpfluch* ran around the hall dressed in bin liners and randomly kissing women, until one of them bit him so hard on the lip that he had to be taken to hospital. Next, the Japanese noise group *C.C.C.C.* abandoned their performance, because the previous act had dumped sewer water over the audience, and the stench caused their drummer to vomit during his solo. Then it got worse. *Z.S.L.Q.*'s entire act consisted of a short man in stockings being chased around the hall by a couple who, when they caught him, crammed garbage, gravel and rotting food into his mouth. By the time Eric Lai came on and swallowed a live boa constrictor, which then crawled unharmed out of his colon, members of the audience were vomiting in their seats. And finally, knowing that only an act of extreme insanity could top what had come before, *LTK Community* ended the evening by pouring gasoline all over the stage, setting fire to it, and gutting the entire auditorium. I now plan to take this show to Europe, and have been told by a British policeman to contact Andrew Lloyds Webber, a man who understands the avant garde and owns many theatres in London." (*China News 15/9/95. Spotter — Andrew Brodniewski*)

— O —

O "I ate dog food because people often dismiss the resurrection of Jesus," church minister Donna Dobson explained to bemused worshippers, after she had finished preaching her Sunday sermon in Chipping Sodbury Baptist Church. "They want proof that he came back to life, and that's why I ate the Chum.

"You see, people didn't believe they would ever see a minister eat a tin of dog food in church," continued Ms Dobson, 35, who lives alone with her dog Sally, "so I did it before their eyes to provide the proof. I chose a can of chicken-flavoured Pedigree Chum, the one top breeders recommend, and I blessed it before smothering it in tomato sauce and tucking in. The congregation reacted very well to it all, and it certainly made them take notice. Pedigree Chum tastes all right, and I was pleasantly surprised. When I was little, I was not allowed tea by my parents if I'd been naughty, so I often used to eat dog food, but it was not very nice back then and I can honestly say the flavour has improved."

Mike Jenkins of Pedigree Dog Foods said: "All our products are perfectly safe if people decide to eat them." (*Bristol Evening Post, 8/9/95. Spotter — Roy Brewer*)

COMPILED BY

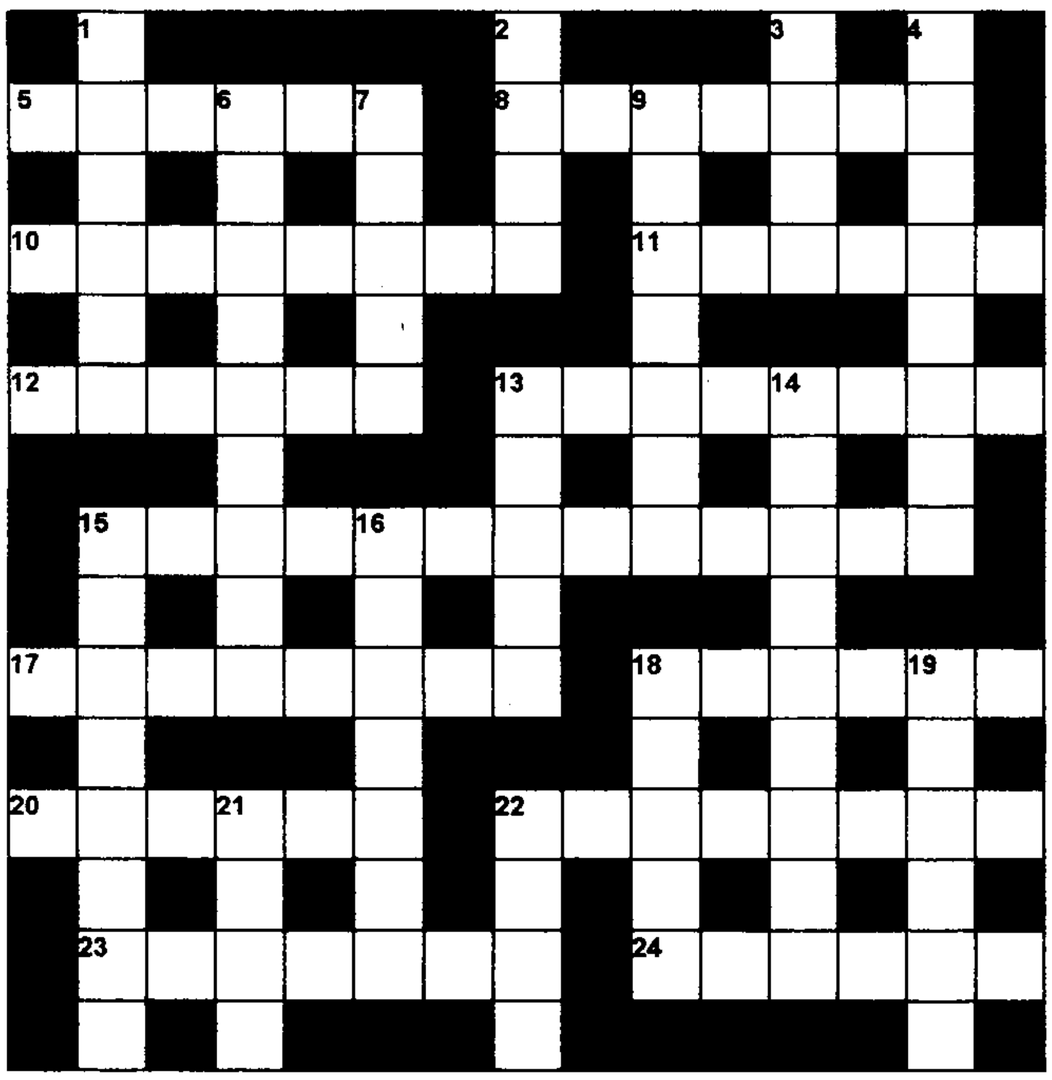
Victor Lewis-Smith

— O —

O *Kofi Ntiamoah, an unemployed copra harvester from Ho, was charged with gross indecency. During his defence, Ntiamoah broke down and pleaded for the court's forgiveness: "I have been doing this thing for some time now," he confessed, amid laughter from the public gallery, "but no one suffers, because I do not do it raw. I always use condoms. I prefer making love to a pig rather than a woman, because I have been unemployed for three years and cannot afford to maintain a girlfriend or a bicycle."* (Ghana Voice, August 1995. Spotter — Sheila Coupland)

EYE CROSSWORD 39 by Cyclops

£100 Winner M.J. FULLER



ACROSS

5/12 Camp it might be, but it traditionally gets members back in action (6,6)
8 Our political gossip bunged on thick? (2,5)
10/22 True-blue supporters? (3,5,8)
11 Chuck out somewhat snide Portillo! (6)
12 (see 5)
13 Eurosceptic malevolent Conservative inside party (4,4)
15 One who's better than all other men at howls of self-pity, we hear! (6,2,5)
17 EC fated to drift east? Shit! (8)
18 Bough in female underwear with no central heating (6)
20 *Hallo!* recruits Frost — possible high level seizure results! (6)
22 (see 10)
23 Sort out booze — it'll give the speaker a lift (7)
24 He's no plonker (6)

DOWN

1 Don't let the public know Hugh's half started to push off (4,2)
2 Those people responsible for article on Hurley's butt (4)
3 A tip: our Nigel's only half there (4)
4 Obsessive anxiety? So insure, stupid! (8)
6 Oath Nixon was fond of? (9)
7 Fergie's first rash outburst when Andy just started to get inside (5)
9 By which perverse natural state bastards rule? (4,3)
13 Australia gets in personal stink with low grade plonk (5)
14 Harold's follower gives everybody a good high in jail (9)
15 Be the first to show Heseletine's ultimately after Major's job (8)
16 One who gives the board some stick, this minister? (7)
18 Born to take the piss out of drug incentive (5)
19 Winnie not queer according to the general body of Christians (6)
21 Eggar's evidently concealing his true mouthpiece? (4)
22 Sofa Mellor has celebrity in (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 27.10.95. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 38

ACROSS: 5 Harrow 7 Acid head 10/11 Signal failures 11 (See 10) 12 Get laid 14 Gutter 16 Twat 18 El Tel 20 Nuts 21 Troops 23 Mandela 25 Woolsack 28 Outlay 29 The press 30 Noraid.

DOWN: 1 Ratings war 2 Brandt 3 Naff 4 Hiding 6/22 Welfare state 8 Houston 9/19 Abe Lincoln 13 Datum 15 Euthanasia 17 Trollop 19 (See 9) 22 (See 6) 24 Extort 26 Och 27 Kiss.

THE THREE TENORIES 'Concert a shambles'

by Our Opera Staff **Lunchtime O'Bizet**

BOOS greeted the Blackpool opening of the Three Tenories as Luciano Heserotti, Portillo Domingo and Dozé Careerist flopped in front of thousands of fans last night.

The three tenories went through a familiar repertoire of well-worn old numbers and offered nothing new to an expectant audience.

Said one: "If I hear *Toryador* or *Nessun Norman Lamont* once more I shall vote Labour."

This view was shared by critics, who thought Portillo Domingo's aria "Qui a couragio vinci" from Puccini's *La Special Air Services* was a new lowpoint, even for them.

Backstage the three tenories nearly came to blows when Heserotti accused Portillo of playing to the gallery with cheap, populist hits , thus trying to upstage him.

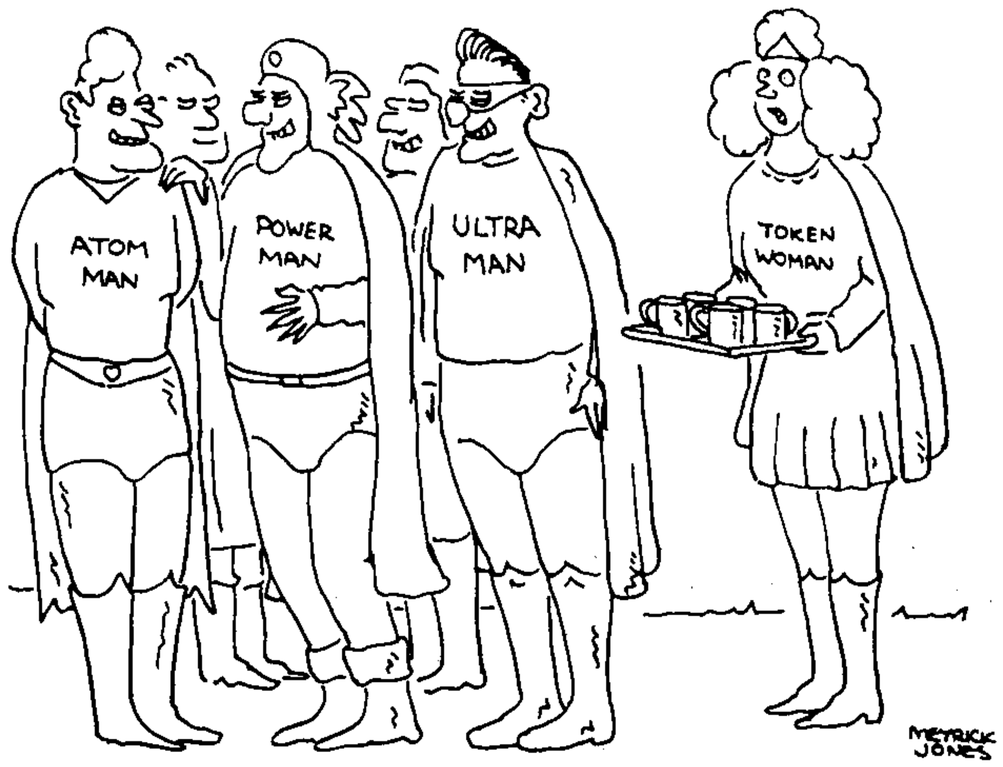
Opera Buffoons

Portillo hit back, accusing Hesserotter of being "a fat, washed-up has-been who has never recovered from his performance in *Near Death In Venice*".

Dozé Careerist, however, went unnoticed and is not believed to have been involved in any of the backstage ructions.

Bellini's Norma Major

He chose to sing the old music-hall hit "My Old Man's A Garden Ornament Manufacturer", which played to complete silence.



COMMENT

Should The Debate About Boxing Be Stopped?

EVERY week at least one person is bored to death in the traditional sport known as "debating the merits of banning boxing".

In one corner there are the supporters who say it's all part of a long sporting heritage. In the other are the critics who claim it has no place in a civilised society.

The spectacle of these two parties pointlessly slugging it out over 2,000 words is degrading.

We say Ban it Now!

Julie Bulldyke writes

STRAIGHTS — don'tcha-just-hate'em?!?!! With their filthy heterosexual habits and their disgusting lifestyles, doesn't it make ya sick even to think about them?!?

GAYS — don'tchajust-loveus?!?! With our teenage girlfriends and our brilliant columns, I say we glamorous gals are on top!?!? Literally!!? Geddit? I do all the time from my gorgeous Raven-haired gal-pal!?!? Geddit? I do etc etc.

©The Sungay Times

DUKE OF EDINBURGH IN SECRET APPEAL FOR LOTTERY MILLIONS

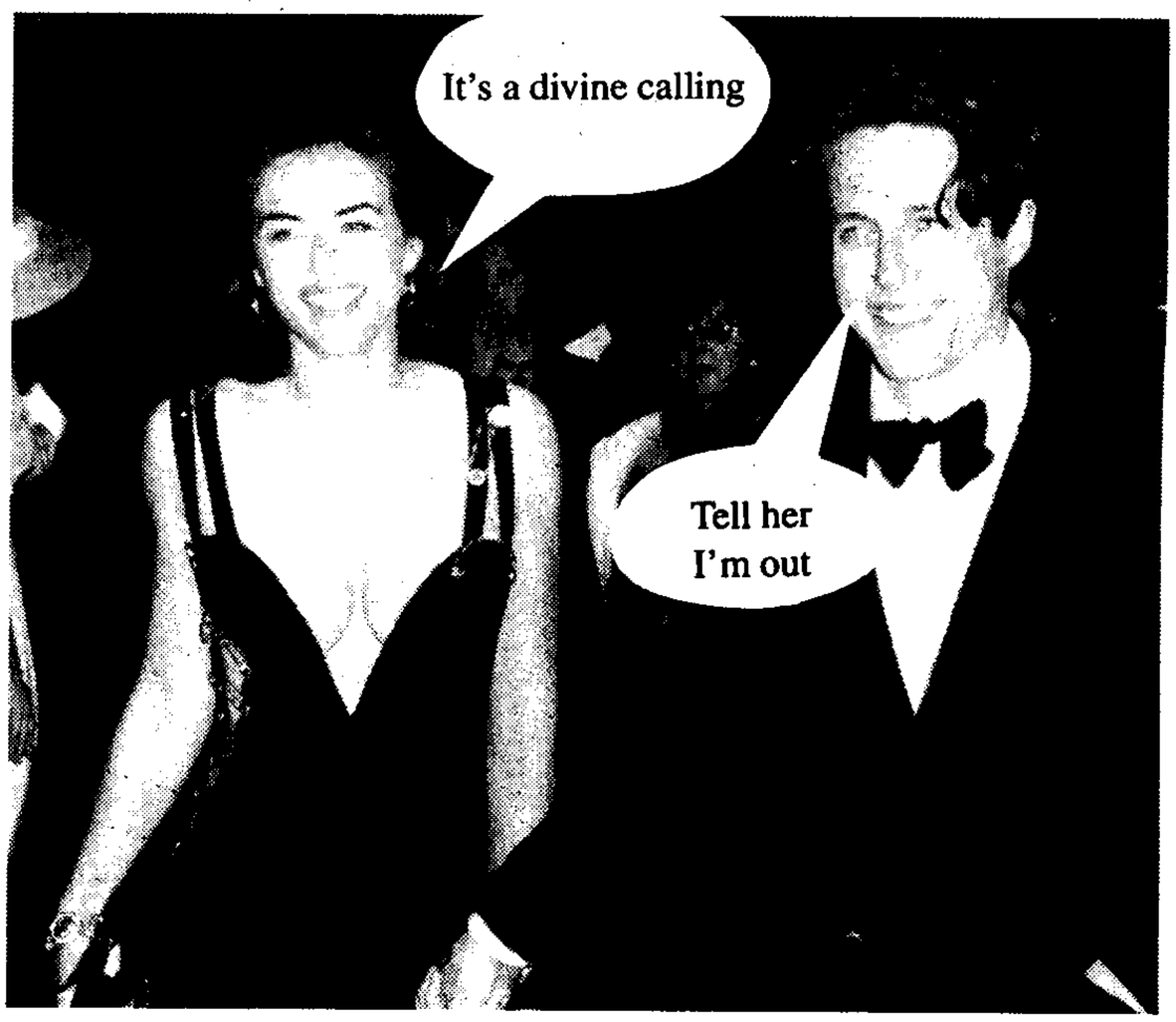
by Our Maritime Heritage Staff **Graham Greenwich**

IN A MEMO leaked to Private Eye, the Duke of Edinburgh has made a personal appeal to the Prime Minister save one of the country's most historic naval institutions — himself.

"It would be a tragedy," he writes, "if this venerable nautical establishment had to be shut down through lack of cash. Millions of tourists come to this country every year just to see me engaged in my traditional pursuits — i.e. cutting down oak trees with my chainsaw."

The Duke of Edinburgh is 89.

HURLEY TO BECOME CATHOLIC



The Secret CONFERENCE Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Sunday

This week will be, in my judgement, the most historic week in the history of my prime ministership, when at last I will reassert my authority over the party, not that I have in any way lost it, and begin the great fight back that will bring us our completely deserved triumph at the next election. Not that we were in any danger of losing it. Oh no. Since I won my great leadership victory in the summer the whole party has rallied behind me. I no longer even need any of my "Bastard" books. Every single Tory MP now has total confidence in Majorism!

No sooner had I written the above paragraph, which was entirely accurate at the time I wrote it, than my new Chairman of the Party Mr Mawhinney ran into the room without knocking, repeatedly shouting the word "Bastard!" in his funny Irish voice. "Have you seen the papers, John?" he shouted. "No," I replied, in my far-too-busy-preparing-my-keynote-conference-speech voice. "What's happened?" "Read this," he said, throwing down a copy of the *Observer*. Across the top of the front page was a huge headline reading "Is There Too Much Sex In The Media? — See Full Frontal Pics Inside". "That's shocking," I said. "No, underneath that, you idiot!" he screamed, reminding me in no small measure of Mr Paisley. "Very Top Senior Tory Minister Defects To Blair: New Blow To Major," it said. At first I was a bit worried, thinking it might be Mr Clarke or Mr Waldegrave, and we would have to find someone else to bring in the biscuits. But then I saw it was someone called Mr Howarth, whom I had never heard of. "What is the problem?" I said. "Well, if it goes on like this we may soon be forced to have an election!" he yelled. "Good," I said, "because I will win and then we will be back in power for another five years." For some reason Mr Mawhinney then began to bang his head against the wall.

Monday

Here we are in Blackpool for our historic conference. I am glad to say that no one has taken any notice of Mr Howarth. They are all wearing badges saying "Hang The Traitor". I went to a meeting organised by the Young Conservatives. It cannot have been well advertised because there was only one small boy present called Justin Squitt. However, he was a great fan of mine. He slapped me on the back and said "Can I have your job?" "Surely you mean my autograph?" I said, laughing, to show I have a sense of humour. I asked him where all the other Young Conservatives were, and he said "In the Labour Party."

At last the conference began with a tremendous speech from Mr Mawhinney. He had discovered a brilliant fact which would destroy the Labour Party forever. It was even better than the one about the Labour Council putting up the statue of a hippopotamus. This time it was about a Labour Council which was giving Asian ladies thousands of pounds to play hopscotch all day in the street. This is a real election winner and the conference rightly gave him a standing ovation.

Wednesday

When I went into the hall this morning I was glad to see a lot of people wearing badges saying "Hang the Asian Hopscotch Women". They were all looking forward to the big speech by Mr Portaloo, and we were not disappointed. His main argument was that the SAS were wonderful and therefore everyone should vote Conservative. I think this is nearly as good as Mr Mawhinney's hopscotch story.

No sooner had I written the above paragraph than I heard the bad news on the BBC. It seems that Mr Mawhinney was completely wrong and that Asian women do not play hopscotch after all. I am beginning to think that he is almost as hopeless as Mr Hanley. I may have to start a new book for "Idiots" with Mr Mawhinney as the first entry. Everyone knows that Asian ladies cannot play hopscotch because of their long saris. Perhaps this senior Tory should join the Labour Party like the other one whose name I can't remember!

Thursday

What a good thing that Mr Heseltine had driven all the way up from Downing Street to be with us. He was in wonderful form, reading out some of the jokes he told the Conference in 1995, 1976 and 1979. He had a particularly brilliant attack on how Mr Callaghan's government sent millions of Labour rats into the street to eat the unburied corpses which lay rotting in the snow. "But then this government abolished the rats and introduced the poll tax!" he shouted, to a huge roar of laughter. "Make no mistake," he said, "my government will not go back to the bad old days when the Labour Party led a general strike and brought the country to a halt during the three-day week." As my wife Norman said afterwards: "With a leader like this, how can we lose?" I was about to thank her for being so supportive, when my mobile phone rang. It was my brother Terry to say that I must be sure to watch his new television series. "I'm at the Crazy Horse Saloon in Paris," he said. "It's nearly as funny as your Conference, although the boobs here are bigger and better than Mr Mawhinney's!" "I have better things to do with my time than listen to you talking about that sort of thing," I told him. "That's not what you used to say when you were nipping over the road to Mrs Kerains," he replied. An official then came up and asked me not to use my mobile, as it was getting picked up by the sound system and relayed all over the conference hall.

Friday

Today was my turn to wow the conference. I had spent a long time writing my speech (which was written for me by Mr Morris Norris) and I was in no small measure pleased with it.

There was one particularly brilliant new idea which will help bring about my "classless society". We are going to help more people go to public school. Then we will have more men like Mr Hurd, Mr Waldegrave and Mr Blair.

The ending of my speech was, however, the very best bit of all. I used all the techniques that I have learnt from my new voice coach, Mrs Doris Morris from the Doris Morris Elocution School in Purley.

The important thing, according to Mrs Norris, is to try and sound as though you believe what you are saying. This was very helpful, as was her suggestion to bang the podium when making a particularly weak point in order to make it sound better.

Anyway, I announced that victory at the next election will mean the end of socialism. "That is because Tony Blair will get in," said my wife Norman, but luckily no one heard because there was so much applause.

Another of my favourite bits of my speech was in my judgement a moving passage about my father which was "a very personal touch", as Mr Norris said it would be when he wrote it.

I said that I was proud of my heritage as a gnome-maker and that even if clever people sniggered it was not funny to me. This went down brilliantly with the conference. There was not a dry eye in the hall as tears streamed down everyone's cheeks and the delegates rolled in the aisles with emotion. Oh yes.

CABBIE WOWS TORIES

by Our Man In Blackpool
Golden Miles Kington

A SPANISH-born cabdriver (Cab No.1946) took the Tory Party Conference by storm yesterday.

He was 41-year-old Miguel Portillo from Enfield, and he had the Tory faithful on their feet screaming for blood *(surely 'more?' Ed)*.

"Those blokes in Brussels," he began, "they're all foreigners, every one of them. If they had their way we'd all still be living under the Nazis, shouting 'Sieg Heil'."

Bonqueros

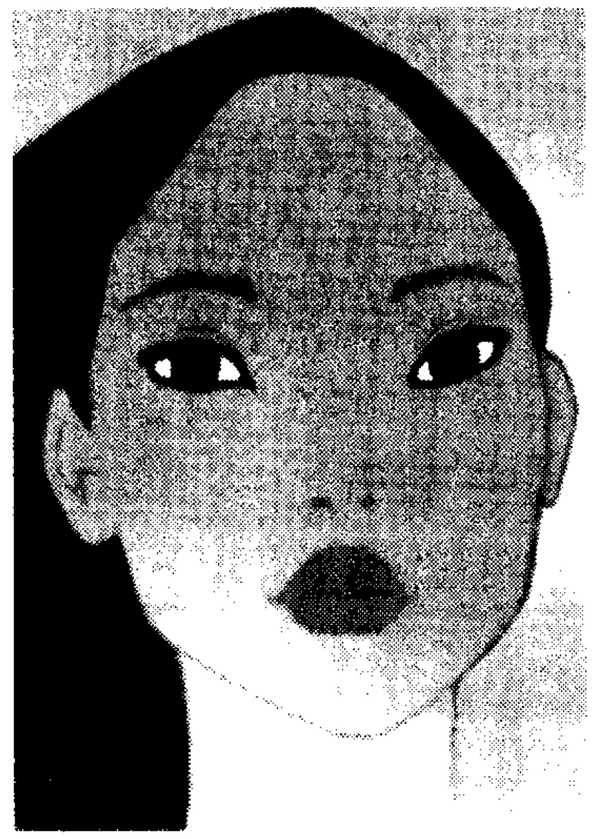
Here the audience rose to their feet and gave him a raised arm salute.

"Tell you what we should do to Brussels," he went on. "Send in the SAS. They'd soon sort them out.

"You know what their motto is?" he concluded. "String 'em up. That's the only language those foreigners understand.

"Know what?" he added to a standing ovation, "I had that General de la Billière in the back of the cab once."

Runner-Up: BBC's The Nation's Favourite Poem Award



NEW FROM DISNEY

PACAHOGWASH

The amazingly untrue story of the native American Indian who single-handedly threw the evil forest-destroying British out of America in 1650, leaving the country to the wise indigenous people and the kindly all-American settlers who subsequently stole their land and massacred them. The voice of Jeremy Irons as the evil British Captain, Captain Evil.

Right on at a cinema near you.

"Don't miss P.C. Hontas" TONY PARSONS

Coming soon — TOPAHONKY

True-life story of wise kindly native Afro-American hero wrongly accused of murdering his wife. It's all the fault of the evil British Los Angeles Police Department. Jeremy Irons is the voice of English racist cop P.C. Fuhrman.

POETRY CORNER

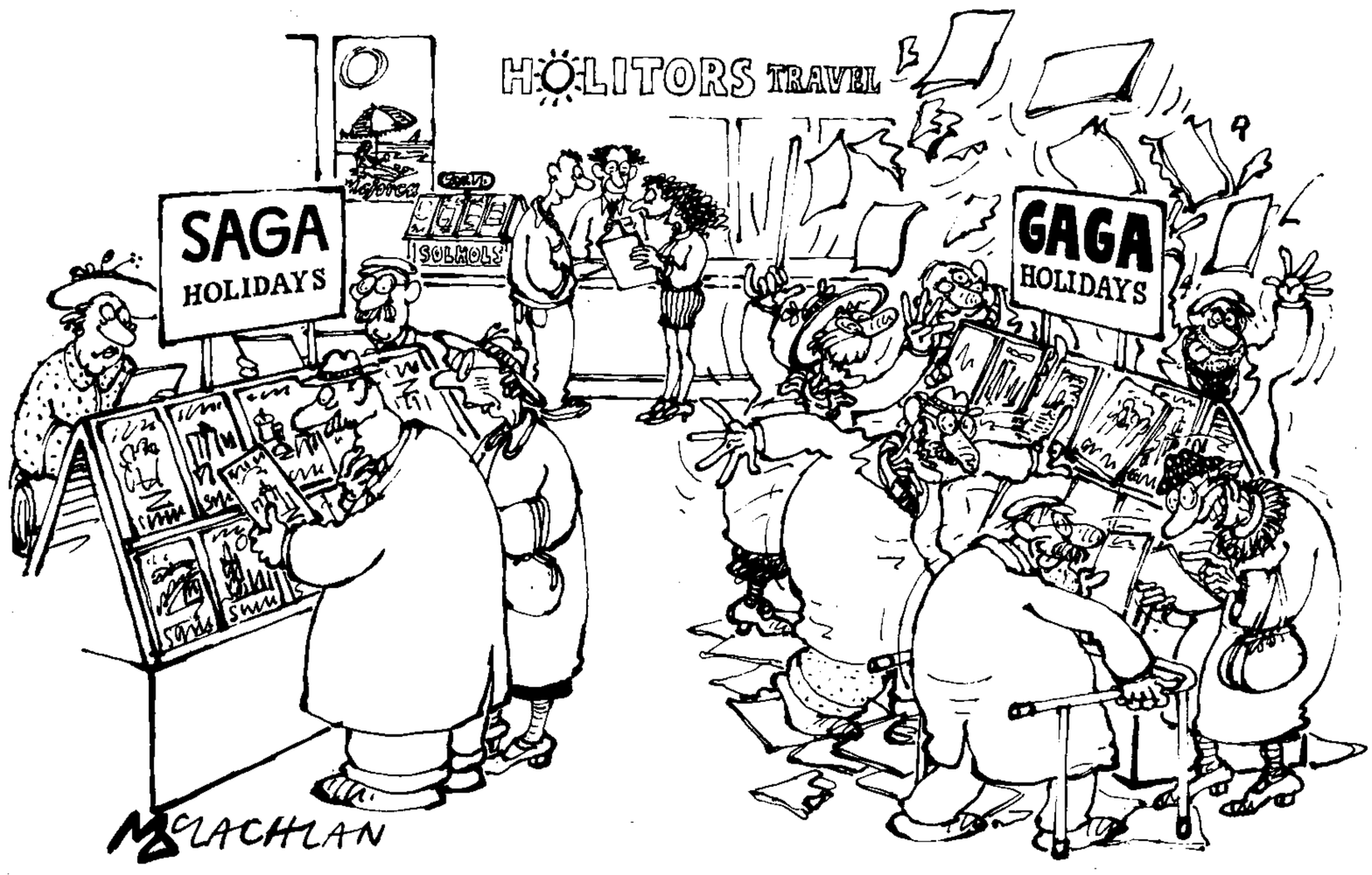
Lines on the 2nd Volume of The Collected Letters of Sir John Betjeman

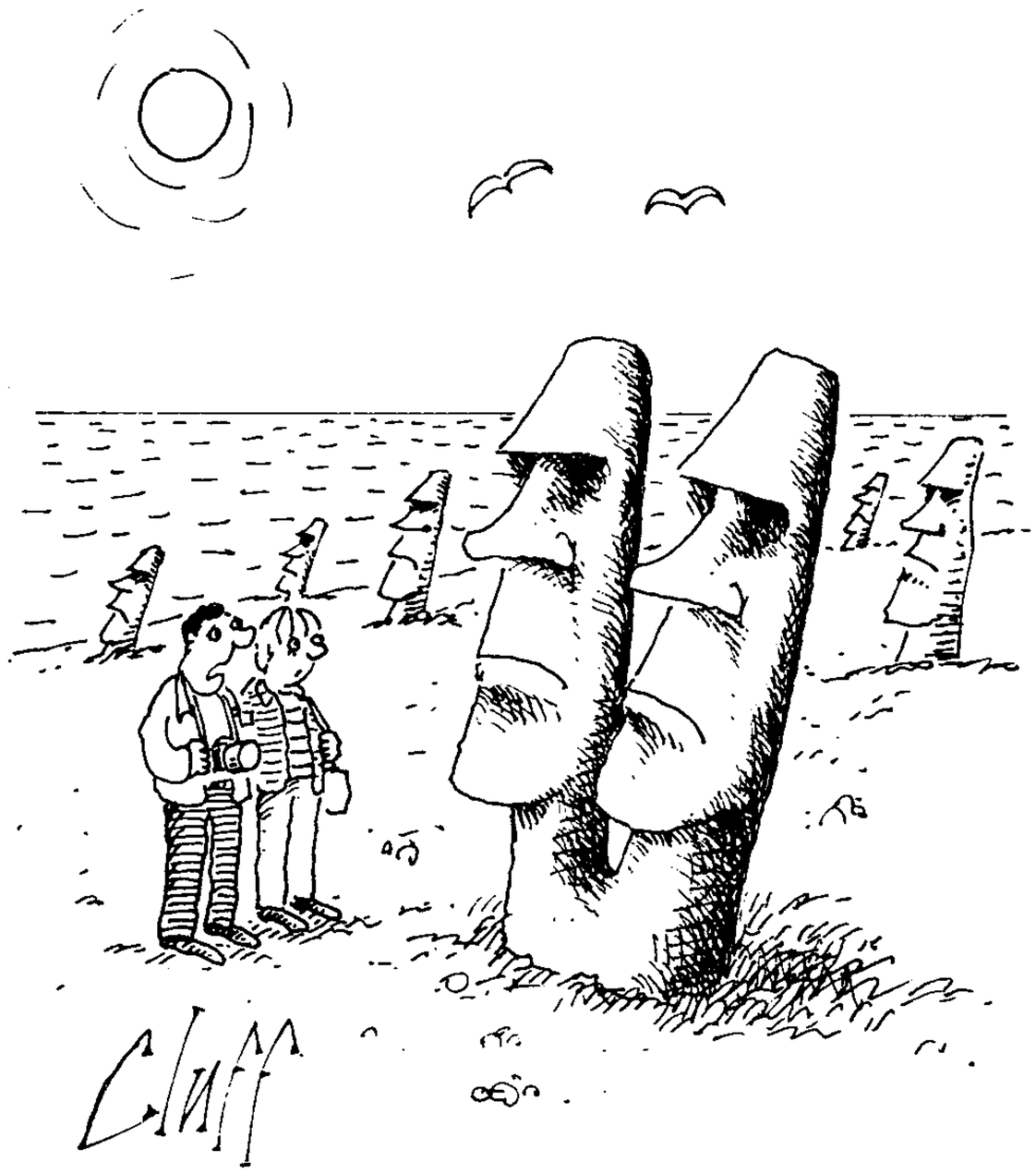
by the Late Poet Laureate himself

Dear old Wibs*, you've
done me proud
These letters made me
laugh aloud.
Did I really write this stuff?
Gosh, it's fun, but I think
we've had quite enough.

(It's not very good, is it? J.B.)

***Wibs = Betjeman's pet name for his daughter Joan Hunter-Lycett-Green.**





"I blame the French nuclear tests"

TOP TORY DEFECTS TO LABOUR

by Our Political Staff
Simon Hefferlump

THE Conservative Party was in disarray last night following the news that a senior and respected Conservative was going to fight the next election under the Labour banner.

"We can't believe it," said a Central Office source. "He is a Tory through and through and has enormous respect on all sides of the party. Mrs Thatcher, Norman Tebbit, Paul Johnson, the Daily Mail — everyone thinks very highly of him."

Cabinet ministers are convinced that the move spells election defeat for the Conservative Party and are now directing their anger onto the man they call "a turncoat and traitor".

Howarth Do They Do That?

Tony Blair is however unrepentant. "The Conservative Party has moved too far to the right — even for me — and I believe that only the Labour Party can deliver what the British People so desperately need — ie, me in Number Ten Downing Street."

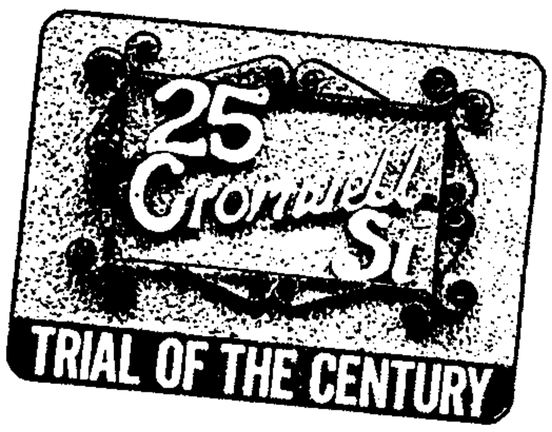
Tony Blair is 42.

THE Sun

MANY of our readers will be shocked, sickened and traumatised by reading the disgusting details of the West trial printed on pages 1-24 in every edition of the Sun this week.

But now the Sun makes a unique offer.

We will give you counselling, absolutely free, by our own highly-trained team of stress counsellors, to make sure that you are not too traumatised to go out tomorrow to buy another copy of Britain's favourite family newspaper.



Just ring the Sun Horror Helpline on 0898 4141* and ask for the following services:

Nausea
Insomnia
Depression
Involuntary spasms
Agoraphobia
Vertigo
Desire to read it all in the Telegraph as well.

***Free calls charged at only £35 a minute at peak time, £25.08p off-peak.**

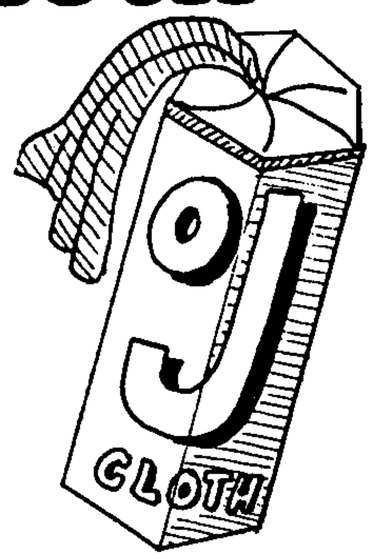
From California!

New From Gnome!

The OJ Cloth

A miracle of modern cleansing technology! Imported directly from Los Angeles, these handy household wipes completely remove unwanted stains, ie blood, and leave everything entirely spotless.

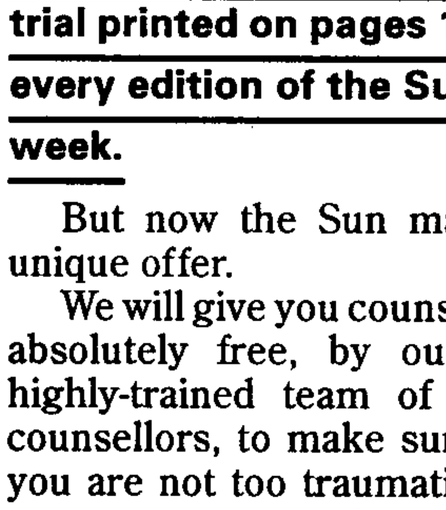
AND the OJ Cloth leaves* you *smelling of roses!



GO ON, GIVE THEM A LONG TRIAL AND THEY'LL GET ANYTHING OFF!

Choice of colours: Black and Blue *Price: £3.99 for 1,000*

Send money to:
Gnome OJ Cioth Offer, Scott Free-Post, Box 911, Los Angeles.



A Spin-Doctor Writes

AS A spin-doctor I am often asked: "Why do you keep ringing up the BBC?"

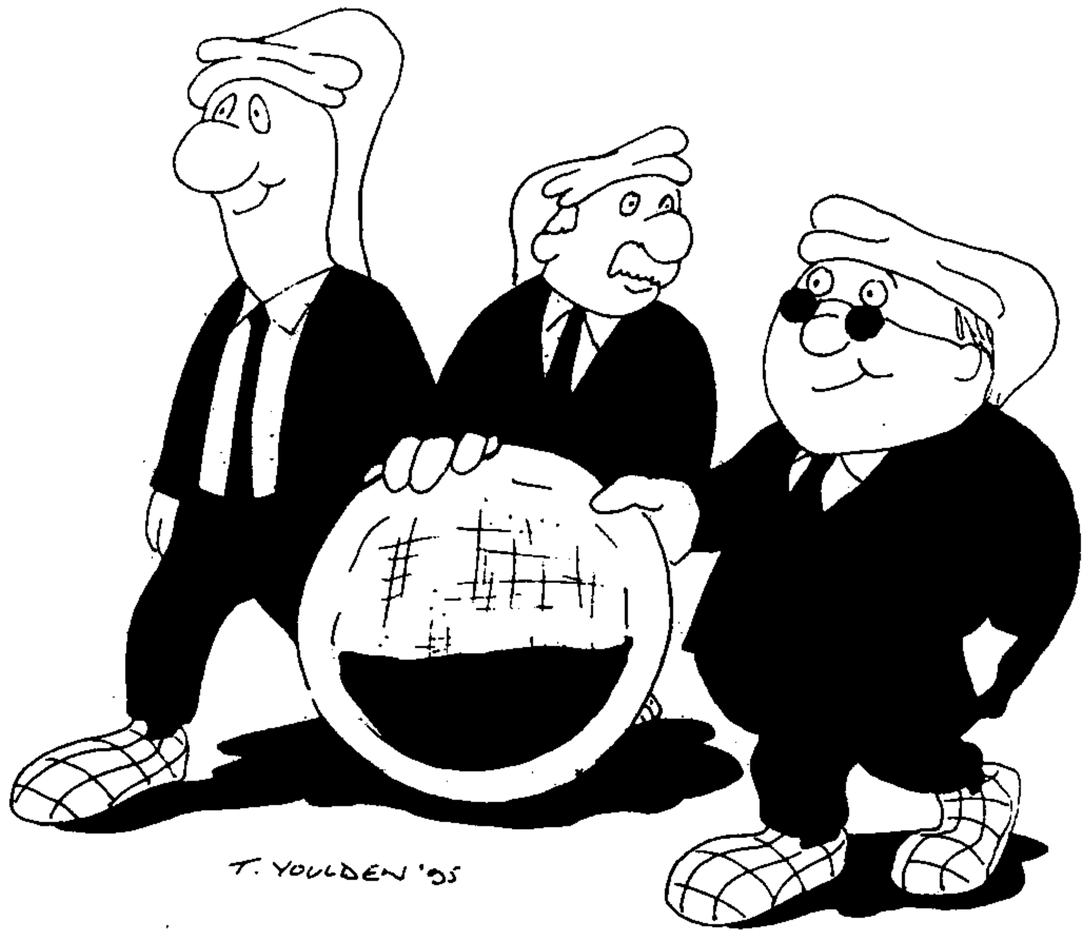
The simple answer is that I am suffering from a condition known as Campbell's Syndrome, or *Media manipulitis*, as it is more formally known.

The symptoms include a swollen head, an enlargement of the mouth and delusions that everyone is incredibly interested in Tony Blair.

If you feel you are suffering from Campbell's Syndrome, you should ring up John Birt at once.

© A. Spin-Doctor

QUENTIN TARANTEABAGS



Winner of BBC's The Nation's Favourite Poem Award

LINES WRITTEN TO COMMEMORATE THE SAD PASSING OF THE 14TH EARL OF HOME

by Wm. Rees-McGonagall

'Twas in the year nineteen hundred and ninety-five
It was discovered that Lord Home was no longer alive.
The word soon spread across moor and glen
"The Baillie's no more — didya ken?"

It was way back in the year nineteen sixty-three
That the 14th Earl of Home became Prime Minister and First
Lord of the Admiraltee.
Suddenly he rose from obscurity into the public eye
When Harold Macmillan looked as if he was about to die.

The Tory Party was in a terrible muddle
So its grandees went into a secret huddle.
"We cannot have Hogg, we cannot have Rab,
So let us choose instead someone who is dim and drab."

The first problem with this brilliant new plan
Was that Home was an Earl and not an ordinary man.
"Don't worry," said Alec, "I will give up my title
If you chaps insist that it really is vital."

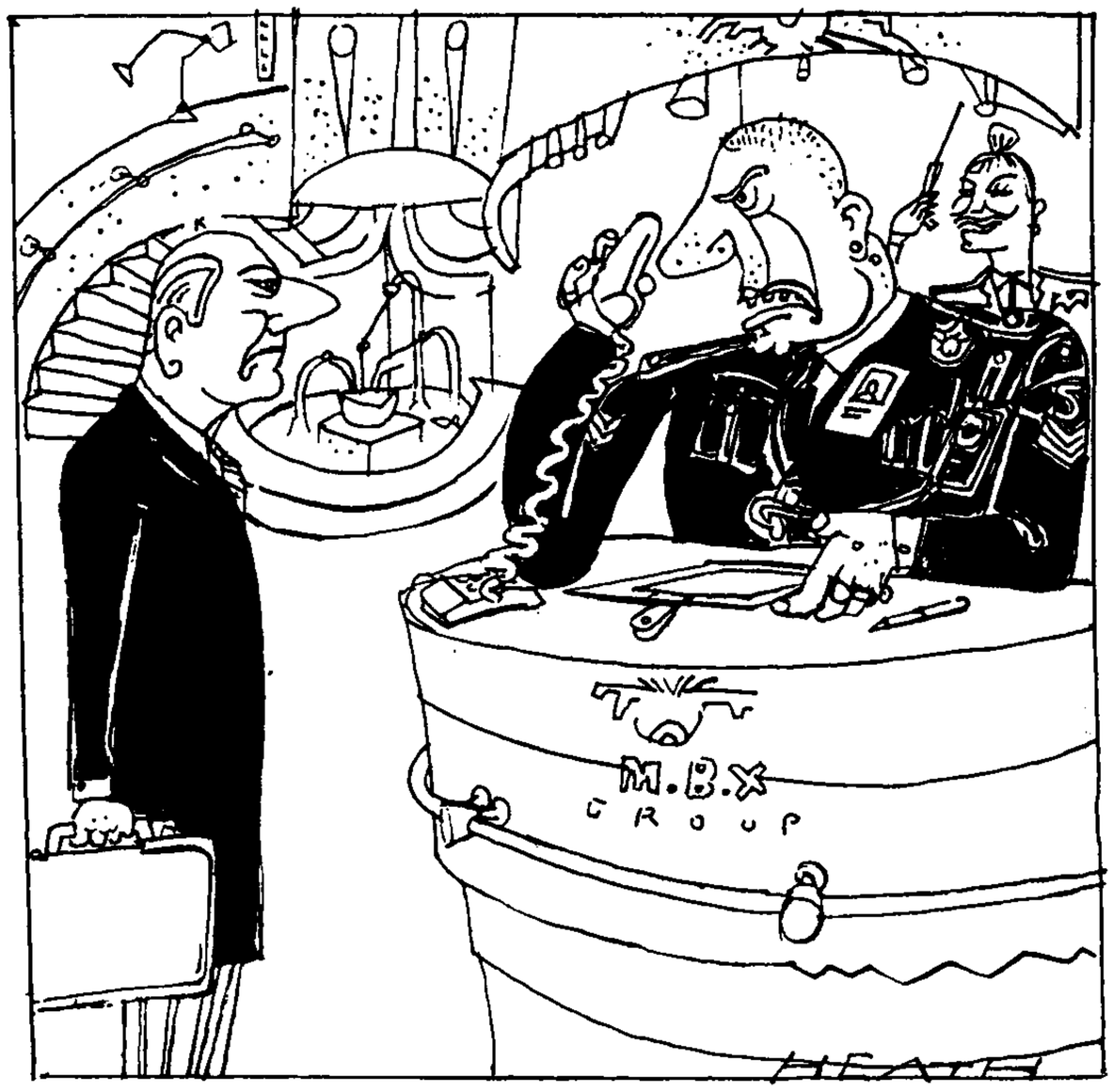
So in a jiffy he became plain Sir Alec
Although he still looked and sounded just like a Dalek.
So soon he became known to the great British mass
Not as Sir Alec but by his nickname Baillie Vass.

For a few brief months he remained at Number Ten
But all too soon it was time for him to return to his native Glen.
For in 1964 they had a great general election
And alas the gallant Old Etonian was not the nation's selection.

So poor Sir Alec was thus given the sack
But to make up for it the Queen quickly gave him his
peerage back.
So for the next 30 years he was free to live quietly as he wished.
He shot many grouse, and he also fished.

Attended only by his faithful ghillie,
In his plus-fours and tweed cap he looked rather silly.
But thus the years passed in quiet contemplation
And he was totally forgotten by the whole nation.

Until last week he passed sadly away
And no one could think of anything much to say.



Great Bores Of Today.

"... you sign here and then print here no not there *there* name of company and who you're seeing is he expecting you? you'll need a badge then wait a minute I'll have to write it all out pin this on and don't lose it I'll need it back when you leave have you been here before? no? well take the lift to the fourth floor turn right and go down the corridor through the swing doors there's a coffee machine on the left by the staircase and you go straight on there's a separate reception where they'll tell you where to go from there don't forget to pick up the internal phone the red one not the blue one and tell them who you are and what's the purpose of your visit... yes... we're all in a hurry mate... no need to take that tone with me..."

VAST COLLECTION of Playboy and Zipper magazines, quick sale as soon to marry [redacted] £15.00.

Wandsworth Borough Guardian

Morris College of Journalisim
The Old School
Princes Road
WEYBRIDGE
Surrey

Pre-paid envelope

A centre of excellence for Further Education and Training

Gloscat

Simple the best

The Patric Walker Column

YOUR STARS TOMORROW

LIBRA
Sep 24-Oct 23

Health worries will come to the fore. However, money problems will seem less important. You will meet a tall, dark stranger, possibly with a scythe, and go on a long journey. You won't need any more horoscopes.

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber

SOCCER

KNEE TELLS ITALIANS 'NON!!'

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man In The Directors Box Enjoying A Star Of Neasden Takeaway Balti House Buffet With Stuffed Naan And A Glass Of Sparkling North Circular Spring Mineral Water

THE WORLD of soccer was rocked to its foundations yesterday by the news that Italian giants InterCappuccino were bidding for the services of Neasden's legendary soccer manager, the ashen-faced Ron Knee.

Speaking through an interpreter, Ron explained that he could not accept the Italians' tempting offer.

"No es possiblé, Mein Herr," he told InterCappuccino's chairman Leo Cardossi, 63. "Mio Loyaltio is mit Neasden. Permanente."

Hot Cross Bung

A clearly disappointed Signor Cardossi said that he had hoped to recruit Ron to manage Inter-Cappuccino, even though it was more of a cafe and less of a football team.

"We had heard on the television that Ron liked 'buns'," he told reporters. "This made him an obvious choice as manager for our Panino 'n' Pizza establishment opposite Neasden Railway Arch."

Today, however, Ron was keen to play down the Bun episode and concentrated instead on his exciting new signing. At a press conference at Neasden Bridge he presented the club's latest acquisition, the 84-year-old Brazilian Aristotle Bossa Nova Junior.

Brazil Nuts

Said Knee: "The Brazilians do two things better than anyone else in the world — make coffee and play football. Aristotle is a great coffee maker and the lads are looking forward to an exciting new blend of interval refreshment from now on."

Ron Knee is 57.

LATE SCORE

EC Regulation Superleague 973/424a

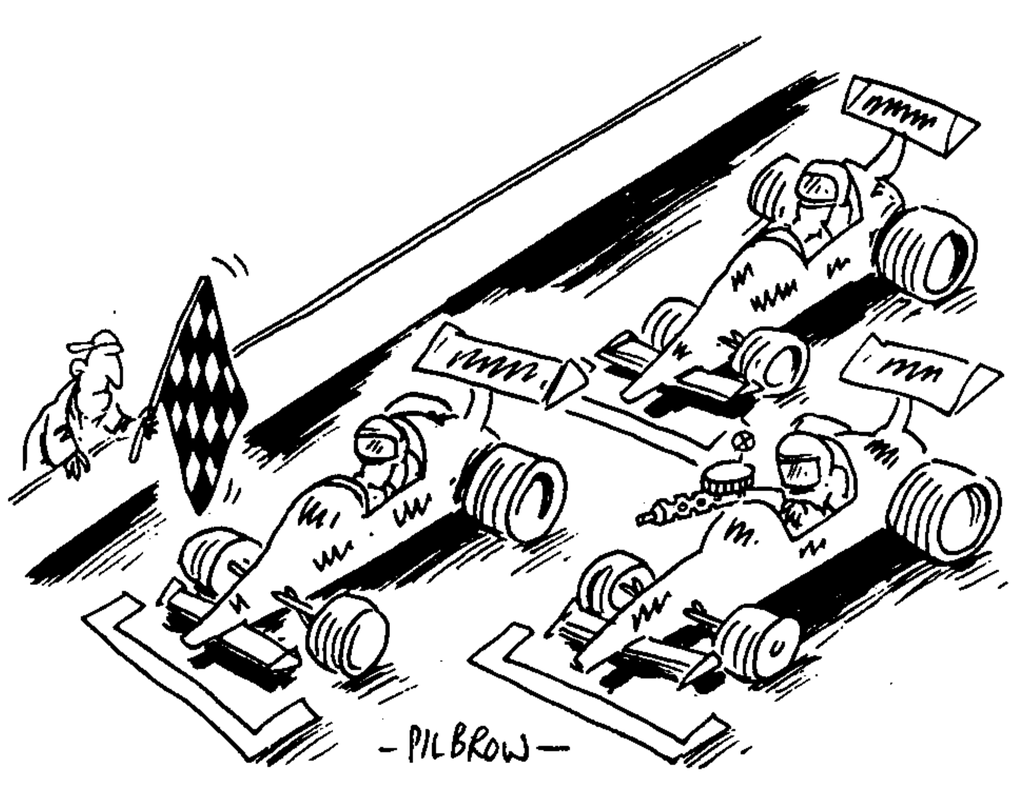
Sanditoksvig Fjördhöppers . . . 7
(Olafsson O. 1, Olafsson P. 1 Olafsson N. 1, Magnusson M. 3, Pevsner [o.g.] 1)

Neasden FC 0

WORLD OF SPORT

Results

Norway vs England . . . . . NO ARRESTS
Ferguson vs Regina . . . . . 3 MONTHS IN JAIL
Grobelaar vs Regina . . . . . EXTRA TIME PLAYED
State of New York vs King . . . . . NO CLEAR VERDICT
(That's enough crime, Ed.)



"Hill looks determined to beat Schumacher this time"

EXCLUSIVE

O.J. TO MARRY ROSEMARY WEST

by Our Crime Staff **Lunchtime O.J. Booze**

IN AN extraordinary twist to the sensational trial that left the whole world reeling, it was reported today by myself that the freed celebrity football hero, O.J. Simpson, is to marry.

The new lady in his life, said a man sitting at his desk next to me, is none other than Rosemary West, herself currently on trial for a series of grisly murders *(see full sickening details on pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 94)*.

"This is an amazing coincidence," said my editor. "I was thinking of making up the same story myself."

A spokesman for O.J. Simpson said: "The story is entirely untrue. Why didn't we think of it?"

This denial was confirmed when lawyers acting for Mrs West said: "This is nothing more than a pathetic attempt to pander to the ghoulish instincts of newspaper readers."

However, those closest to the amazing story remain convinced that what they are calling "The Murder Marriage of the Century" *will* take place — in this newspaper, if nowhere else.

Judge Ito is innocent.

Daily Mail

The Truth About Saint Diana And That Cow Julia Carling

by Our Unbiased Royal Staff Richard Kay

IN A sensational new twist to the story of the Princess and the Rugby hero, it has emerged that Diana was in no way to blame at all for anything that happened.

"It was all Julia's fault," said a source extremely close to the Princess of Wales, "and everyone should blame her and not me."

Whitewash

"She's just a blonde bimbo and headline grabber", the source continued. "She married someone more famous than her and now she wants to cash in on it."

Rubbish

Other newspapers have erroneously claimed that the saintly mother of two was in some way responsible for the break-up of the Carling marriage. But this is 100% wrong according to a completely different independent source. "She couldn't leave her

husband alone. She was always pestering him with phone calls and trying to arrange secret meetings with him in their Fulham love-nest," she said. "It's time the truth was told and that is quite simply that this woman is desperate for publicity and she'll do anything to get her picture on the front page." She added: "You will make this the lead, won't you, Richard?"

Princess Diana is innocent.

THE NEW Daily Mail
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1995
NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 35p

Forward with Labour

WAS JOHN MAJOR THE RIPPER?

Police E-fit picture of suspect

By Daily Mail Political Staff

POLICE are investigating a startling new lead in their 16-year-old search for the man known as the Yorkshire Ripper.

Top police sources have long believed that the man gaoled for the string of horrific murders in Yorkshire was not the real killer.

Now, following information supplied by the Daily Mail, police crime analysts have come up with a psychological profile of the serial murderer.

Vote Labour

"The man we are looking for," said top psychologist Dr Cracker, "is grey-haired, about 50, wears glasses and lives in central London.

"The suspect is a bit of a loner and is believed to live a fantasy life in which he imagines he is a very powerful figure leading his own political party," he continued.

"His problem may stem from the fact that he has a more successful older brother and, in order to compensate, he probably became a mass-murderer."

Don't Vote Conservative

Members of the public are warned "not to have a go" and "not under any circumstances to give him their support at a general election".

Full story pages 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

The Day Blair Saved Seal-Pup Sammy

EXCLUSIVE
By Our Political Staff

ONE of the best-kept secrets of Labour Leader Tony Blair's recent Brighton Conference triumph was his heroic swim out to sea in order to rescue a 6-month-old fluffy toddler seal from drowning.

Just before he was due to make his keynote conference speech, Hugh-Grant-lookalike Blair leapt fully clothed out of a top-floor window of the Grand Hotel into a raging sea, after spotting the baby seal in distress.

Seal of Approval

Without thought for his own safety, Britain's next prime minister breasted the waves and brought Sammy the seal safely to shore.

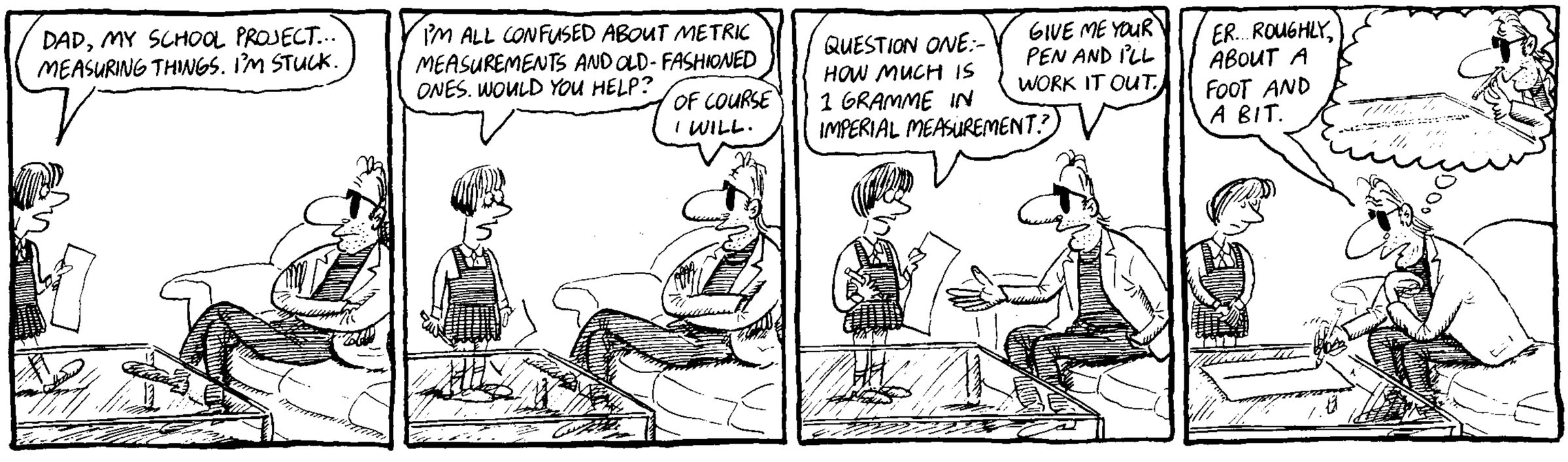
After performing mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, the great statesman gently returned the now-smiling seal to the waves, where he was greeted by his anxious seal mum.

"God bless you Tony," she barked, with tears of gratitude running down her cheeks. "I'll never vote Conservative again."

INSIDE: Prescott Joins MENSA 5 Beckett Sexier Than Pamela Anderson — Mail Poll 6 Why Oh Why Blair Is The Greatest Statesman of the 20th Century, by Paul Johnson 8 Should Cherie Blair Be Lord Chancellor? asks Lynda Lee-Potter 9 Liz Hurley To Convert To Labour by Baz Bigboy 10 Pop-Tart Tycoon Mikos Ritzenberger To Split From Miranda? (No) A Dempster Exclusive 14 Unfunny Anti-Major Cartoon by Mac 4

Celeb

LIGGER


DAD, MY SCHOOL PROJECT... MEASURING THINGS. I'M STUCK.
I'M ALL CONFUSED ABOUT METRIC MEASUREMENTS AND OLD-FASHIONED ONES. WOULD YOU HELP?
OF COURSE I WILL.
QUESTION ONE:- HOW MUCH IS 1 GRAMME IN IMPERIAL MEASUREMENT?
GIVE ME YOUR PEN AND I'LL WORK IT OUT.
ER... ROUGHLY, ABOUT A FOOT AND A BIT.

DIARY

RICHARD LITTLEJOHN

Call me old-fashioned, but if I spent my evenings eating baby kittens, I'd want to keep pretty bloody quiet about it. But that's what the so-called social workers do *sur le continong*, I kid you not. In France, Italy and — Heil Hitler! — Germa-bloody-ny, over three thousand five hundred baby kittens are eaten by foreign social workers every single day.

And you know what? They can't even be bothered to skin them first.

Furry inderesdin, as the jackboot brigade would say.

Seriously though, makes you think, don't it? What's the world coming to, that's what I'd like to know.

And what's worse is that from March of next year, EEC law — devised by our old friends the pig-faced Brussels fatcats — will require our very own British social workers to scoff a kitten a day. And a live kitty at that.

Frankly, it makes me want to totally throw up. Already, Brussels directives have run a horse and cart through our traditional white heterosexual British way of life. Just take a gander at the legislation that's due our way over the next six months:

**From November, it'll be illegal to sit in the driver's seat to drive your car. Under EEC directives, you'll have to sit in the passenger seat and lean over to get to the steering-wheel. Call me barmy, but I'd say this could cause major pile-ups. But do they care? Do they bloody heck as like.*

**From December, British butchers will only be allowed to sell onions. Little onions, big onions or medium-sized onions, oh yes — but not a sausage of lovely British meat. And what about the poor old British fruitmonger? He'll be nicked if he's found selling fruit and veg, but he'll be allowed to flog wallpaper and assorted floor-coverings — just so long as they're manufactured in Germany!*

**From January, all black muggers and rapists will be entitled through an EEC directive to a luxury month-long trip on the QE2. And if they've also brutally murdered old ladies who've survived two world wars, then they'll get a free bottle of French bubbly thrown in too.*

I don't know about you, but I sometimes wonder why we continue to humour the bastards. In God's name, isn't it about time we called for a Third World War to stop all this damn nonsense?

EDITOR: What you writing about today, then, Littlejohn?

LITTLEJOHN: About 1400 words, Ed.

EDITOR: Any particular subject, Littlejohn?

LITTLEJOHN: Nah — but that don't matter, Ed.

EDITOR: Really, Littlejohn — why not?

LITTLEJOHN: I'll just turn it into dialogue. It'll look ever so humorous and ideal for what I think it was Richard Littlejohn once described as my comic genius.

CHORUS: Oh no! Not another bloody comic dialogue!

LITTLEJOHN: Give us the friggin' money!

Were I a little old lady forced at gunpoint by Asian social workers to leave her home before being buggered up the arse by luvvie council officials and then bunged into a Frog loonybin, I'd be pretty bloody angry, I can tell you. Luckily, this hasn't happened yet. But when it does, I'll be downright furious. We white male heterosexuals from Essex and proud of it may be in the minority these days, but at least we have our values.

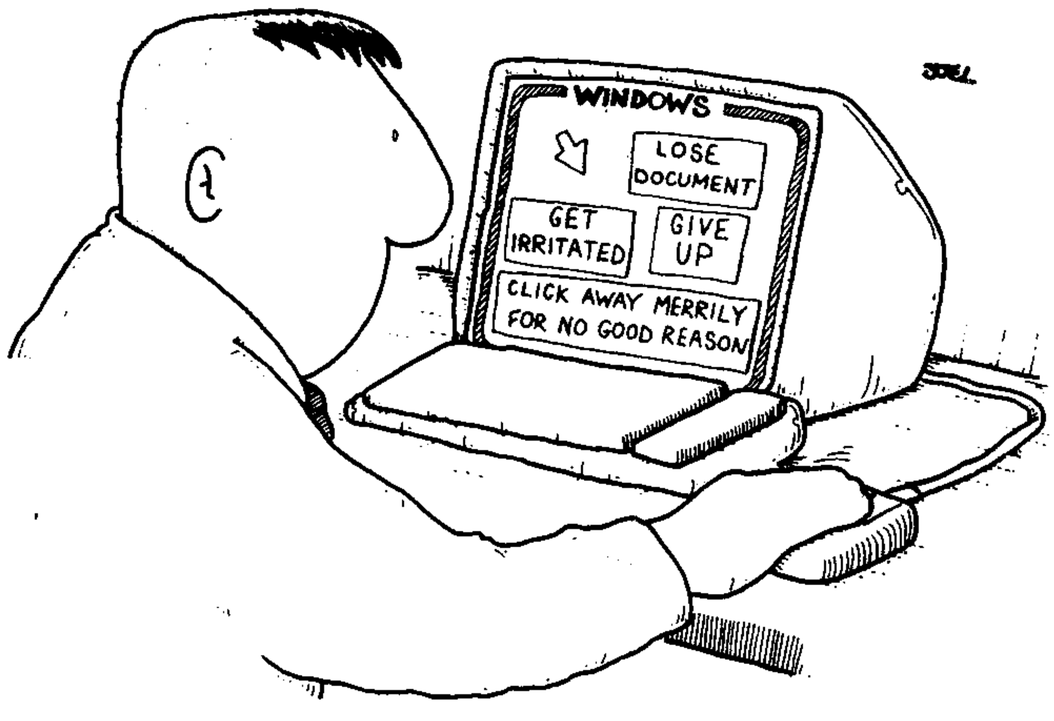
For all her fancy jewellery and snobby grin, that Queen Mother's just a fat old slag. And pampered with it. When was the last time you saw her in jeans? Answer: never. And have you ever seen her chewing a decent piece of gum then taking it out of her gob and offering it to a mate? Answer: no. And I'll tell you another thing. She couldn't whistle a tune by a great British singer like Lonnie Donnegan even if she tried. And you know why? She's a German, through and through. You can see it in the way she goosesteps her way across a ballroom, and you can see it in the way she munches on the Bratwurst when no one's around. So the next time we're all forced at gunpoint to go outside Clarence House and wish the old dear a Happy Bloody Birthday, let's all take rotten eggs and leave a damn good stain on her snooty Kraut designer frock.

What a bloody shambles, eh? Littlejohn's Law of Total Church Cock-Ups states that if you're a white, male heterosexual — and we're the only minority without its own social worker these days — you won't be able to get into a Church in 1995 without being sodomised up the arse by a trendy cleric banging a tambourine and extolling the virtues of nuclear disarmament.

Correct me if I'm wrong, but I always thought Christianity was about belting out lovely old hymns and giving as good as you got even if it meant kicking the other bloke in the bollocks. But not nowadays, oh no. Nowadays, that's considered very out of date, thank you very much. Nowadays, it's all about admiring people from ethnic minorities with beards and grubby robes who don't have a proper job and haven't had a good wash for forty days and forty nights and who swan around in sandals talking about love and peace accompanied by a motley set of tarts and longhairs and — God help us — "carers".

You know something. If I were a little old lady who'd just been brutally sodomised by a trendy cleric, I'd be hopping mad. Call me an old-fashioned sentimentalist, but I'd like to castrate them all with my teeth — and wash it all down with a refreshing pint of Great British Lager.

You couldn't make it up if you tried, I'm telling you, you really couldn't. Not in a million bloody years — or longer, come to that. I mean, even if you really tried, you couldn't make it up. You know, it's the sort of thing that makes you think: "You know, this is the sort of thing that really makes you think." What am I on about, I hear you ask? I'll tell you what I'm on about, since you ask. The way a Great British Columnist can pad it all out to the end of his Great British Column without even so much as bloody thinking and yet still get paid a fatcat salary twice the amount of a dozen nurses'. Talk about the country going to the dogs. No — you couldn't make it up if you tried, honest, you really couldn't.



Mr King, 63, faces a fine of more than $2 million and a possible five years in jail if convicted of nine charges. One of Mr King's former accountants, Joseph Maffia, is to testify for the prosecution.

The Times

A FIFE district nursing sister took the top award in the Shetland Sheep section at the Rare Breeds Survival Trust annual show at Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, at the weekend.

Dundee Courier

DUDLEY
COLLEGE
BRITISH EDUCTION AT ITS BEST

Dudley College

Literary Review

No morgue heroes...

From Potter's Field
Patricia Cornwell
(Little, Brown, £15.99)

IT'S all Thomas Harris's fault. Harris is a genius of melodrama, the kind who comes along only once a generation: he's our Chandler, our Conan Doyle.

Unfortunately, he's also bloody slow. *Red Dragon*, his first Hannibal Lecter novel, was published in 1981. *The Silence of the Lambs*, his second, was published in 1989. At eight years per book, we're due the third any day now unless Harris has become even more of a laggard (he was last spotted attending the trial of the Florentine mass murderer, Il Mostro).

Given the monstrous worldwide success of the Lecter books, it's an inconceivably long time to leave a gap in the market. So plenty of others have rushed in to fill this vacuum. Hannibal Lecter himself may remain inaccessible, under copyright, but serial killers? We gottem, say the publishers.

In 1989 Cornwell had yet to get a detective novel into print. No fewer than seven publishers rejected her fourth attempt, *Postmortem*. From an editorial standpoint, they were right. From the commercial point of view, they were being over-sensitive: too picky, as the amazing success she has enjoyed since demonstrates. *Postmortem* was published in 1990 and she's been delivering them annually ever since.

Cornwell now employs a staff of ten in the office in Virginia where she churns out these books. *From Potter's Field*, her sixth novel about her pathologist heroine, Dr Kay Scarpetta, has been a number one bestseller in the States and it's immediately gone to the top of the fiction lists here too. Yet, strange to say, Cornwell can't write for toffee. The incompetence is terrific. She can't create characters, she can't manage suspense. Human dialogue's beyond her and plot passes her by. She can't even imagine frightening villains. It's all saw-dust.

On the plus side she has in her narrator, Dr Kay Scarpetta, a female heroine, which wins her many PC points. You think that since Scarpetta is never convincing as a human being at all, it doesn't much matter what sex she's assigned? Oh, you're so wrong to think that. Go down that path, sunshine, and where would the much vaunted women's crime fiction, from Sara Paretsky to Sarah Dunant, be? Up the creek without a paddle, innit?

Cornwell's other great attraction is that she gives you lots of corpses on trolleys. She once worked as a part-time police officer and assistant in the Virginia medical examiner's office and got to see some autopsies. So now she serves up plenty of stiffs, split down the middle, heads sawed open, samples taken, the lot. It's her stock in trade, her special turn. Fred West was an amateur in comparison.

Here's her original contribution to the genre, in so far as she's made one: instead of having a detective for protagonist, she has a corpse-doctor. It poses a little logical problem which she hasn't yet solved — how to get her heroine out of the morgue and into conflict with living criminals? The only answer she has found, cribbed from Thomas Harris again, is to have her psychopathic serial killers become obsessed with her, one after the other. No particular reason — it just *happens*, OK?

So in *From Potter's Field*, the feeblest of her books yet, there's a mad, mad killer called Gault, who keeps presenting her with victims. A psychiatrist explains: "I believe this man has a weird significant relationship with you... When he murders someone it is his gift to you..." It's just like a cat bringing in mice, you see. "Gault thought you would be pleased. He killed the mouse for you and brought it into your morgue."

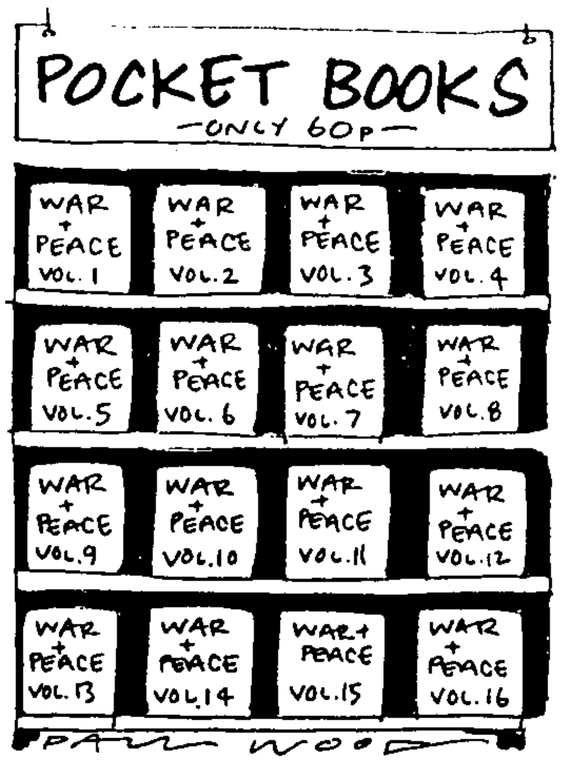
Just to join up the loose ends, mad mad Gault has teamed up with mad mad Carrie, the lesbian former lover of Scarpetta's favourite niece Lucy, the FBI computer prodigy, so they're both under threat again! Coo!

Gault kills his twin sister in New York, then a policeman, then he comes and kills some more policemen in Virginia, then he goes back to New York and in a lucky moment, Dr Scarpetta gets to kill him herself with her own trusty dissecting knife: "Arterial blood squirted across my face as I pulled the knife out and his transected femoral artery hemorrhaged to the rhythm of his horrible heart." Pooh!

None of these escapades are ever made to seem at all necessary or consequential: reading this book feels like a long trudge on a pointless errand. A trek with incredibly irritating companions too: Cornwell's attempts to give Scarpetta a character — mama mia, she eata the pasta! — are embarrassing. On the other hand Scarpetta's tenacious commitment to PC rectitude is hilarious. She never calls anybody old, only ever "an older man". Kneedeep in corpses, purportedly about to be murdered by loonies, these people nonetheless keep warning each other against smoking, or drinking too much. They still insist on airbags before getting into a car.

When Scarpetta's married lover asks her how she feels about his wife, she replies: "I have always been fond of your wife and think she is a fine person." When Scarpetta has trouble with one of her staff, she says to her: "You are a lovely person, Jennifer, and we are very fortunate to have you here." When she interviews the murderer's parents, she tells us: "Before we went inside his house, Mr Gault warned me that his wife did not have good coping skills."

No wonder Gault junior wants to murder this crashing bore. It's just a shame he fails so pathetically — Hannibal Lecter would have eaten for breakfast.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PAUL WOOD

Books & Bookmen

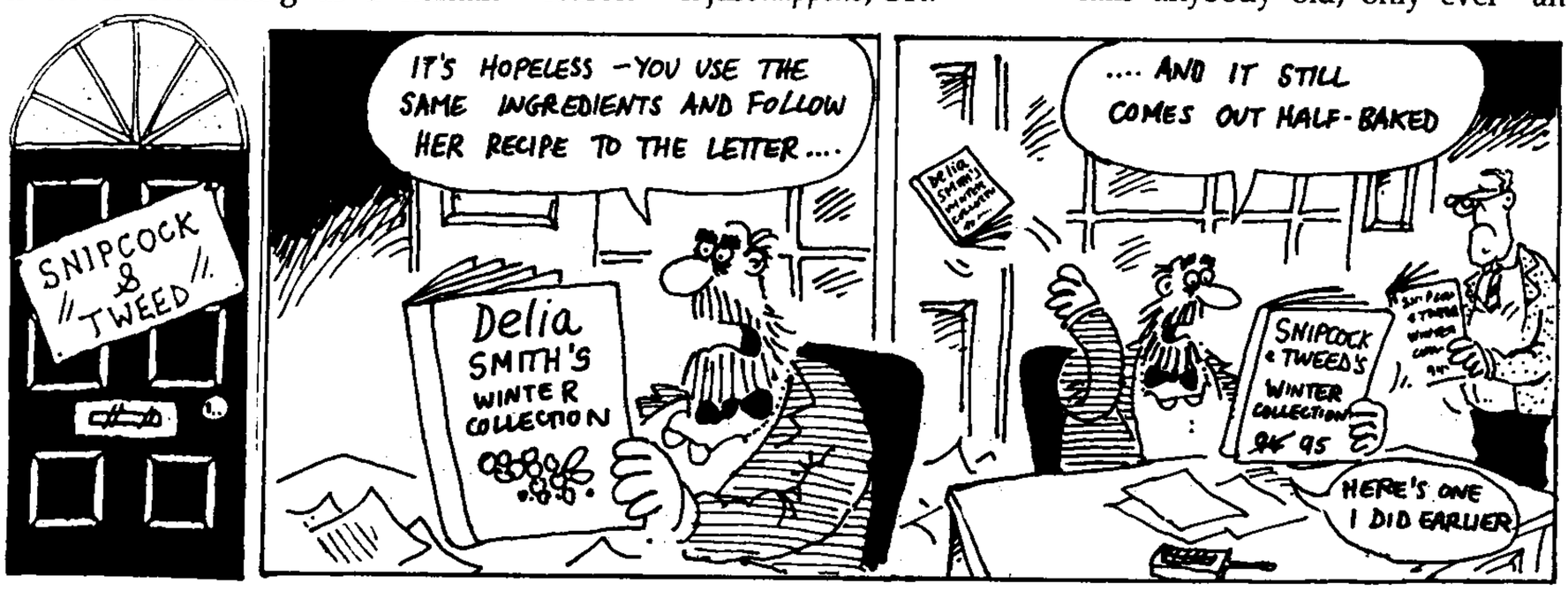
☐ FORGOTTEN harpie Lucretia Stewart has not been idle in recent months. As well as penning thoughtful newspaper articles about *femmes fatales* (see *Eye* 880), she has produced a book, *The Weather Prophet*, about her travels in the Caribbean.

And she seems to have had a jolly nice time, too. In the true spirit of the pink, plump and past-it in an unfamiliar hot climate, she did plenty of in-depth research on what it's like to have sex with black men — "looking for the big bamboo", as it is described locally. One West Indian newspaper was so excited by her bonkbuster that it published extracts under the headline "Violence and Sex — Hot and Oily"!

But la Stewart — known in the Caribbean as Excretia Borgia, or "A Womb With A View" — has not emerged smelling of hibiscus. In her book she virulently attacks several prominent figures, and actually suggests that the house of one Antiguan woman (of which she helpfully gives the exact location and a detailed description) should be burned down.

Since the book was serialised in the *Outlet*, an Antiguan weekly, the hapless victim has received several threatening phone calls. She is now suing Ms Borgia — and her publishers, Chatto & Windus — for libel in the Eastern Caribbean supreme court.

'Bookworm'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.... AND IT STILL COMES OUT HALF-BAKED
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HERE'S ONE I DID EARLIER

footnotes

FINGERS CROSSED – BUT IT'S A CERTAINTY:
Camelot directors, Tim Holley, Sir George Russell, David Rigg, Peter Murphy

SCAMELOT

CAMELOT, the firm which runs the national lottery, dishes out luscious contracts exclusively to its own shareholders without bothering to put the contracts out to tender.

The name Camelot sounds romantic, but it is a ruthlessly commercial consortium of five big companies which have swiped all the best business from setting up the lottery.

The computer company ICL has 10 per cent of Camelot, and by April this year had enjoyed just over £50 million worth of contracts in setting up lottery computers. A Camelot spokesman says these contracts went out to tender. Asked if they were awarded to the lowest bidder, the spokesman replied mysteriously: "not necessarily".

Each of the other four Camelot shareholders have 22.5 per cent of the shares. The big arms company Racal supplies the telecommunications linking the computer terminals. By April this year, this had already cost more than £20 million. GTECH UK, whose parent company is in the United States, supplies all the software. By April, this had already cost £11 million.

A Camelot spokesman told the *Eye* that none of work done by GTECH or Racal was put out to tender. He explained: "This was basically because GTECH and Racal were an integral part of the bid and they were included in the proposals to Oflot, and obviously it was in our interests to put them in as low as possible otherwise we would be fairly inefficient and would undermine our chances of being awarded the contract."

In other words Camelot bid for the lottery on the grounds that it had experienced companies like Racal and GTECH to do the work, and therefore it is justified in awarding those companies huge contracts without allowing any other companies a look-in. This novel interpretation of free enterprise has been enthusiastically endorsed by two heritage secretaries: Stephen Dorrell and Virginia Bottomley.

Two other Camelot shareholders have also won Camelot contracts. De La Rue provided "ticketing and consultancy services" (£8.8 million) — not to mention Camelot's energetic PR director, David Rigg (sic); while Cadbury Schweppes consults on "consumer trends and retail development" (£300,000).

A Camelot spokesman says all this work was properly tendered and won by Camelot shareholders in fair and open competition. A spokesman for the government regulator of the lottery, Oflot, told the *Eye* that Camelot's spending on contracts, even if the contractors are all shareholders, "has nothing to do with the regulator".

The great Camelot scam has been the subject of two big TV investigations recently: BBC *Newsnight* on 10 October, for example, and BBC *Panorama,* transmission date not yet fixed. Broadcasters attempting a detailed exposé of Camelot on ITV should be careful in case anyone complains to the independent and fair-minded Independent Television Commission — chairman Sir George Russell, who is also chairman of Camelot.

Bermuda try-on

■ THERE seems no end to the determination of ADT, a company based in Bermuda to avoid British tax, to attach its name to state schools funded by the British taxpayer.

In April last year Glyn School, a comprehensive in Ewell, Surrey, got government permission to become a technology college. These colleges are ordinary state-funded schools by another name, but they can raise funds from private industry.

ADT rushed forward with £100,000 and so was able to appoint "sponsor governors" — in this case Mr Richard Painter, a big wheel in ADT (see last two *Eyes*), and Miss A.E. Entwhistle. The school promptly asked to change its name to Glyn ADT Technology School — and the "reforming" secretary of state for education Gillian Shephard agreed at once. That was in February. Four months later, in June, the school asked Mrs Shephard if it could select 30 per cent of its pupils "on general academic ability". She's still thinking about that.

The *Eye* asked Mrs Shephard's department if ADT's contract to install a "swipe card" system in the school had been put out to tender. When you read the reply, remember that education ministers are always boasting that grant-maintained schools like Glyn/ADT are democratically responsible to the secretary of state. Here it comes: "The department does not collect details of individual contracts placed by schools."

FULL QUESTIONS, HALF ANSWERS: Ann Clwyd

Timorese beasties

■ FOREIGN office ministers don't seem to be taking much notice of their colleagues' mauling by the Scott inquiry for saying things in the Commons that turn out to be "economical".

Ann Clwyd, Labour MP for Cynon Valley, has been asking about East Timor, a territory in the east Pacific which was illegally occupied by the Indonesian dictatorship in 1975 and has not been recognised by any country since.

On 22 December last year Mr Alastair Goodlad, then minister of state at the foreign office, wrote in a letter to her: "In the debate on 15 December, you asked whether the government gives aid to East Timor. I confirm that we do not." Perhaps the word "not" was added by mistake.

In June, in further questions to the FO, Clwyd uncovered three projects in Indonesia which are funded by the British government aid programme.

On 26 June she asked the foreign office about the huge grant to the "regional physical planning project for transmigration in Indonesia" — a crude ethnic-cleansing programme which "settles" or plants reliable Indonesians in the occupied territory. "Does this project include East Timor?" she asked.

The foreign office minister Tony Baldry replied: "Yes". On 4 July he further disclosed that project staff on another government-aided job in Indonesia "reviewed the land use of the whole archipelago, including East Timor". On 17 July the new foreign office minister of state Jeremy Hanley revealed that training courses "concerned with land use planning" had been based in Dili, the capital of East Timor.

Clwyd has sent these and other matters to the National Audit Office (NAO) on the grounds that they involve government spending in a territory whose government is illegal under international law. The Pergau Dam scandal started with an NAO investigation.

LEX do business

■ To the numerous examples of substantial business between Lex and the post office since post office chief executive "Wild" Bill Cockburn joined the board of Lex add this.

Parcelforce, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the post office, has just decided to buy 500 vehicles made by the Italian firm, IVECO. The post office tells the *Eye*: "IVECO themselves nominated five dealers to prepare the vehicles for Parcelforce, and one of them is Lex Ford Commercial of Enfield [a Lex subsidiary] who are preparing 100 vehicles."

The post office says IVECO won the contract after three firms tendered. "The post office tendering procedure — and the principles apply to all our business — is second to none when it comes to fairness and seeking the most competitive suppliers of quality products."

SHIRLEY'S PORTERLOO

THE *Eye* confidently predicts a popular "double whammy" for Lady Porter and her former Tory colleagues on Westminster council.

Before Christmas district-auditor John Magill will be handing down his final verdict that Porter and Co illegally spent millions of pounds of ratepayers' money to rig elections. Also before Christmas, Mr John Barratt, former chief executive of Cambridge county council, will deliver his enormous report (the size of two big novels, the *Eye* hears) on the decision of the Porter administration to move homeless families into two tower blocks riddled with asbestos. The *Eye* can reveal that the Barratt report will be even more devastating than the Magill report.

Things did not always go so badly for Lady Porter. Early in 1992, for instance, the Charities Commission started asking questions about the John Porter Charitable Trust of which Lady Porter and her husband Leslie were trustees. A full investigation was started in summer 1992, and there followed a long correspondence between Personal Financial Management Ltd, which administered the charity, and the commission.

The commission was specially worried about a reference in the accounts to interest of £7,901 when there was no evidence of a loan. They asked again and again for the name of the borrower. The Porters and their charity refused to disclose it. The commissioners were in their rights — and had the power — to insist, but they didn't. A firm letter from Sir Leslie Porter, Dame Shirley's husband, was enough to shut them up.

PARACETAMOL — A Suitable Case for Treatment?

■ **PARACETAMOL is one of Britain's favourite and most profitable painkillers, but if taken in doses several times higher than those recommended it damages the liver.**

Every year about 200 people die and about 30,000 are treated in hospital after overdoses of paracetamol. Almost all these cases involve damage to the liver. An Oxford survey of self-poisoning, published in the *British Medical Journal* in May 1992, concluded: "By the end of the study period the incidence of self-poisoning by paracetamol had increased to four out of 10 overdoses. In the light of paracetamol's hepatic (liver) toxicity, a way should be found to reduce the likelihood of self-poisoning through paracetamol."

Such a way was found 18 years ago. In 1976, Professor Andre Maclean, a distinguished scientist at the medical school of University College London, discovered that if methionine is included in the paracetemol, the liver is protected. Methionine is a natural part of every protein. There are a few grams of it in most daily diets.

Maclean's discovery was patented. Rights to market paracetamol including methionine were obtained by Sterling Healthcare, which then sold Panadol, the best-selling brand-named paracetamol. Ten years later, Sterling eventually came up with Pameton, a paracetemol pill which incorporated methionine. It was large and expensive. The National Health Service did not accept it as a prescription medicine. Sterling did not market it as a separate drug, for sale over the counter. Not surprisingly it was a flop. Paracetamol, dangerous to livers in overdose, went on being sold in enormous numbers, and Pameton, safe for livers in overdose, effectively disappeared from view.

Earlier this year Penn Pharmaceuticals, a small company in Wales, went to the Committee for Safety of Medicines with a new, smaller and more easily-marketable pill which mixes paracetamol with methionine. Penn asked Professor Maclean to make the case for such a pill to the committee. The presentation succeeded and the new pill becomes available for the first time this month under the generic name co-methianol.

The new pill has been greeted with disdain by the vast and booming paracetamol industry, whose ten top companies recently combined to fund the Paracetamol Information Centre. A central part of the centre's information is that deaths from paracetamol are chiefly the fault of the people who take the drug and not at all the fault of the firms who market it.

The director of the centre, based at the new luxury Thameside complex at Butlers Wharf, is Dr Geoffrey Brandon. He is not at all pleased that the new pill is on the market and accuses Penn of "trying to stir things up to create a market for their combination" and of producing "weird statements and weird figures" to back their claims.

Asked why Professor Maclean, a former member of the government's Committee on Safety of Medicines, should back such a "weird" project, Dr Brandon said the professor was a "paid consultant" to Penn. This is not right. Prof Maclean was paid a one-off sum by Penn for his presentation to the government committee. He gets no regular payment, and stands neither to gain nor to lose from the success or failure of co-methianol.

Methionine, Dr Brandon told the *Eye*, was disgusting and dangerous. "It is," he said, "what gives the funny smell to decomposing fish. The pills also give you flatulence, which stinks some more." He went on: "In the long term, methionine adds to the possibility of furring up of arteries and heart disease and there's some evidence that it accelerates the growth of tumours."

To prove these terrifying claims, Dr Brandon sent the *Eye* nine papers from scientific journals. They apply only to doses of methionine much larger than the doses in the new pill, taken by people who carry the gene for homocystinuria, a rare recessive disease — at most 2 per cent of the population.

Dr Brandon insists methionine is more dangerous than paracetamol, and points out that more people die from overdosing on aspirin than on paracetamol. He was impatient with the suggestion that Pameton was deliberately undermarketed and undersold in case it spoiled the profits from Panadol, or embarrassed its manufacturers into admitting that Panadol might in some circumstances be unsafe. "That is rubbish," he said. "Pameton just wasn't successful. Psychiatrists didn't want to take it up."

Professor Maclean agreed that more people die from aspirin than from paracetamol, but said: "That doesn't seem to me to be relevant," he says. "The point is that methionine makes paracetamol safer: the combination of the two makes a much better pill to have in the cupboard, especially if there are young or vulnerable people in the house." He says there is no evidence at all that methionine even in overdose has any damaging effect on the heart or increases the risk of cancer. "It may have bad side effects in a very few cases. We certainly don't yet know of any. What we do know is that it makes paracetamol a lot safer, and could save lives."

GLASSED!

■ **SOME readers of the *Eye* series on John Gorman, the man who got beaten up after he complained about finding a condom and some glass in his British Airways food, may think Mr Gorman is a bit of a whinger.**

Electronics company director and *Eye* reader Peter Blatchford doesn't think so. On a BA flight to Geneva on 8 June, he chewed on a chunk of broken glass which had found its way into his BA breakfast. His mouth bleeding, he complained bitterly and a sympathetic report was prepared by the cabin services director.

Mr Blatchford waited in vain for an explanation and an apology. Two months later, on 24 August, he got a letter from BA's insurance branch asking for the Geneva flight number. Mr Blatchford reminded BA that an incident report had been prepared on the flight itself.

On 14 September, BA's insurance wrote again. There was no denial that the glass was in the food — but no explanation for it and no apology. Instead BA offered £150, which Mr Blatchford has angrily refused.

What happens next? Will Mr Blatchford get abusive calls in the middle of the night from Heathrow police station? Will his car be vandalised? Will thugs spray his eyes with mace? Watch this space...

PETER BLATCHFORD

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

In the City

TAXPAYERS will no doubt be encouraged to learn that medical marvel Ernest "Alzheimer" Saunders is mounting his latest bid to rewrite history — by overturning his 1990 Guinness conviction — on a legal aid tab.

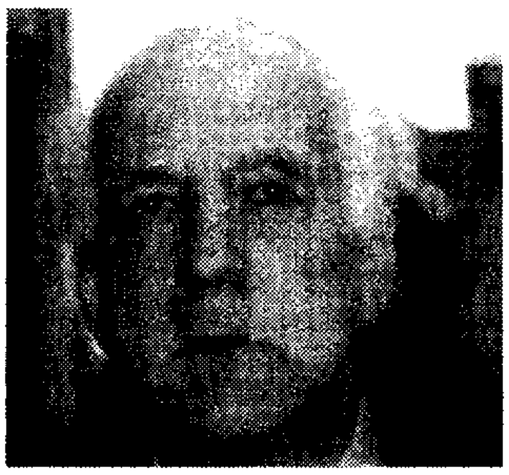
This will be the third handout for "Deadly Ernest", who was on legal aid for the trial and the subsequent appeal, when a suitably shambling Saunders had his sentence halved by a sympathetic court of appeal informed he had irreversible Alzheimer's disease.

Since then the former Guinness chief executive has made a miraculous recovery and now skis and plays tennis. Furthermore he earns well as a marketing consultant while entitled to a pension of up to £70,000 a year from his former employer. So how come he qualifies for legal aid?

No doubt in the same way all the other fat cats do: by claiming that they really have no disposable income or free assets — or maybe in Saunders' case, can't remember any.

Joining Saunders in the new appeal, ordered by home secretary Michael Howard last December, are his three co-convictees (Gerald Ronson, Anthony Parnes and Jack Lyons), who sadly have not been able to avail themselves of legal aid.

Their appeal was initially based on the failure of the Serious Farce Office to disclose information concerning other share support operations which, they claim, proved that what they did for Guinness was no more than City custom and practice in the eighties. In particular this concerns the 1988 decision of the licensed dealers tribunal not to revoke the licence of TWH which had acted for clients of merchant bankers Henry Ansbacher during the 1986 Distillers bid and other bid situations.



'Alzheimer' Saunders: Unappealing

But just as Saunders has espoused their cause — despite denying at the trial that he knew anything about a Guinness share support operation — so the other three have jumped aboard Saunders' claim that he was denied a fair trial because he was forced to give evidence to the Department of Timidity & Inaction inspectors which was not only taken down but used against him. All four also maintain that the police investigation was held back, possibly for political reasons as the government were keen to get a conviction to head off pre-election accusations of City sleaze, so that they could incriminate themselves before the DTI.

A sad day indeed for justice when guilty suits are forced to admit the truth and then have those truths passed on to police and jurors rather than being able to rely on the right of silence and the ability to obfuscate, hide and deny.

Saunders has already scored a legal victory by persuading the European commission on human rights to support his view that he was victimised by having to tell the truth. The European court is now waiting on the appeal court decision before handing down its verdict.

The SFO is expected to argue that there was no injustice to Saunders or the others in using the DTI transcripts of their evidence because that's the way parliament planned it. The companies act specifically denied the right of silence before DTI inspectors to enable them to discover the facts about directors behaving badly. This was considered to be in the public interest, as who knows better why a company has collapsed or money disappeared than those who were responsible? Furthermore the law always required the DTI to pass on evidence to the police if this merited a prosecution.

So where is the abuse? The suggestion from Saunders is that this breaches the human rights convention against self-incrimination.

Saunders and friends rely also on the argument of the supposed delay in the police investigation until the DTI had completed its interviews in which they were compelled to answer. The SFO argument is expected to be that the police, while waiting in the wings from an early stage, were not brought in until there was clear evidence and that evidence relied on much more than the DTI transcripts.

The non-disclosure issue is less clear cut. Indeed, the Guinness trial judge Mr Justice Henry indicated that he felt the TWH material should have been disclosed before the second Guinness trial (Lord Spens; Roger Seelig) because the dealers were called in by Spens.

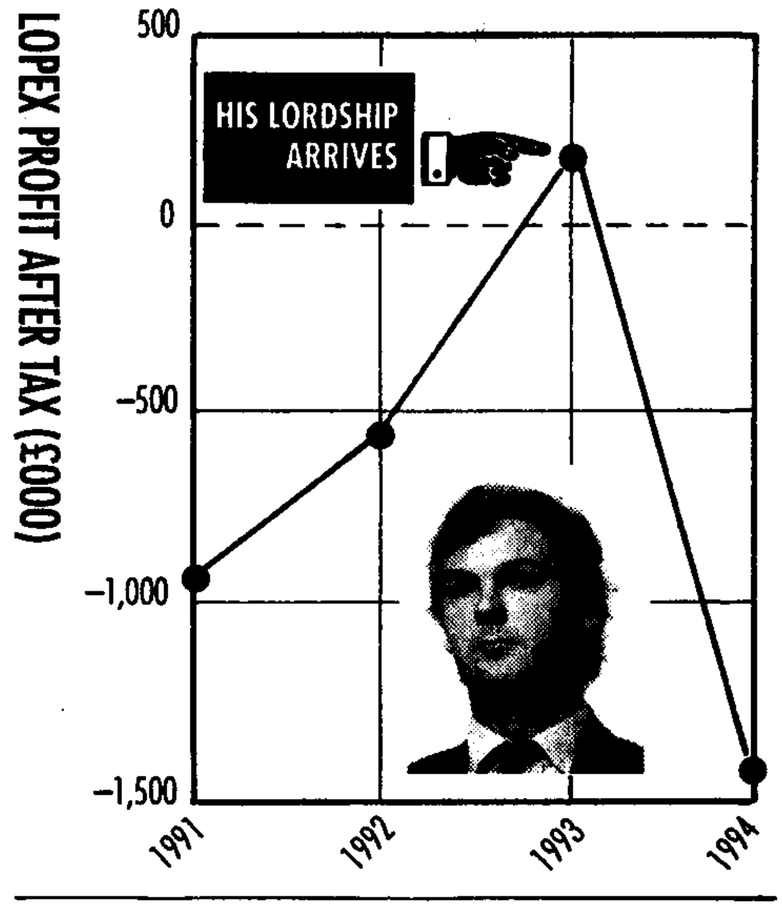
The defendants, lead by former stockbroker Parnes for whom TWH is perhaps most helpful given that he, like TWH, was acting as an intermediary, claim this and other evidence about share support operations would have vindicated their claim that they believed they were doing nothing wrong. Apart from TWH the defendants also point to two other City *causes célèbres* — the Burton takeover of Debenhams and the Turner & Newall bid for AE. In both cases secret share support operations with indemnities against loss were employed. So too were false invoices to explain subsequent payments.

Prosecutions, it has only now emerged, were considered in both cases. The DTI mounted an investigation of Burtons/Debenhams which was referred to the SFO in 1989. The SFO agreed with the DTI that there was insufficient evidence to bring a prosecution. Had it done so one of the targets would have been none other than the oh so innocent Gerald Ronson. The DTI also considered a prosecution under the insurance act against the Ronson-controlled National Insurance & Guarantee.

Both the Bank of England and the DTI investigated the role of AE adviser Hill Samuel during the T & N/AE battle and the share purchases by Barclays and Midland. After the DTI completed its report in 1988 it was decided not to prosecute.

Just how much all of this would have helped at the Guinness trial is uncertain. But there are very clear differences between the deals in which TWH intervened and Guinness. With TWH there were no multi-million success fees or breaches of the companies act regarding the undisclosed purchase

British Management Part 28.
VISCOUNT CHANDOS OF ALDERSHOT. Corporate Finance Director Kleinwort Benson until 1993, Director Capital and Regional Properties, Director Lopex Group — advertising and marketing specialists — since 1993.



by companies of their own shares. The secret payments made to Ronson (£5 million) and Parnes/Lyons (£3 million each) on false invoices, hidden from the Guinness board other than Saunders and his henchmen Olivier Roux and Tom Ward, bore all the hallmarks of dishonesty.

It is open to debate whether if the TWH material had been disclosed — which it probably should have been — it would have been of any help to the defendants. Certainly at the trial Ronson and friends made little use of the evidence given about AE and another example, brewers Matthew Brown. And none of the trio ever told the DTI inspectors that he thought secret indemnities for share support was a "grey area" as they all claim now. Indeed Lyons accepted that secret indemnities were wrong. Furthermore, the very scale of the secret payments for buying shares with no risk of loss and the use of false invoices suggested they knew what they agreed to do was illegal.

How the lord chief justice and his two colleagues will view these arguments remains to be seen. However, it may prove relevant to their decision that only Saunders ever denied doing what all four were convicted of doing and the jury clearly believed the other three's statements that he knew. All four were convicted for what they did. Their greatest complaint seems to be "why us?" when all the other players (Spens, Ward, Seelig, David Mayhew, Ephraim Margulies) were acquitted or not charged. The judges — bearing in mind how their colleagues were conned by "Alzheimer" Saunders once before — may not rush to overturn the convictions and open the door to multi-million pound claims for compensation.

'Slicker'

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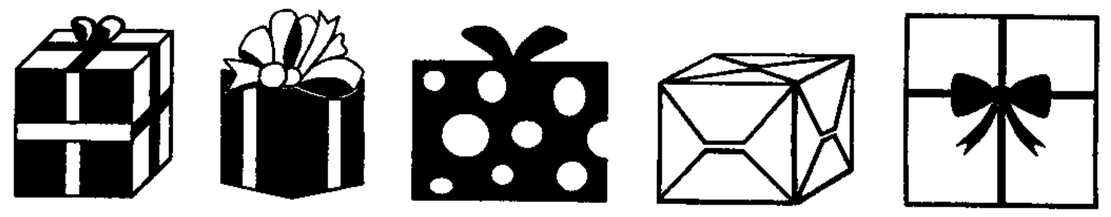

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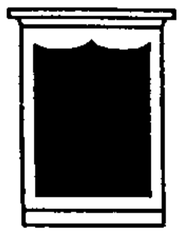

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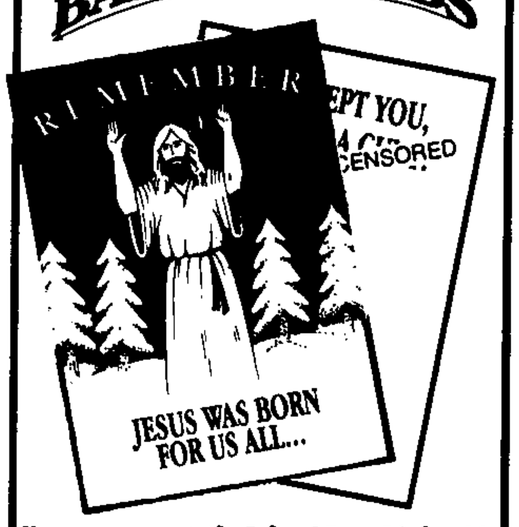

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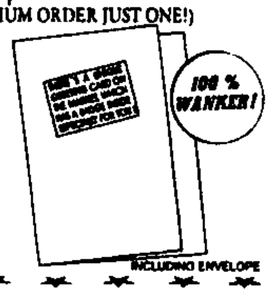

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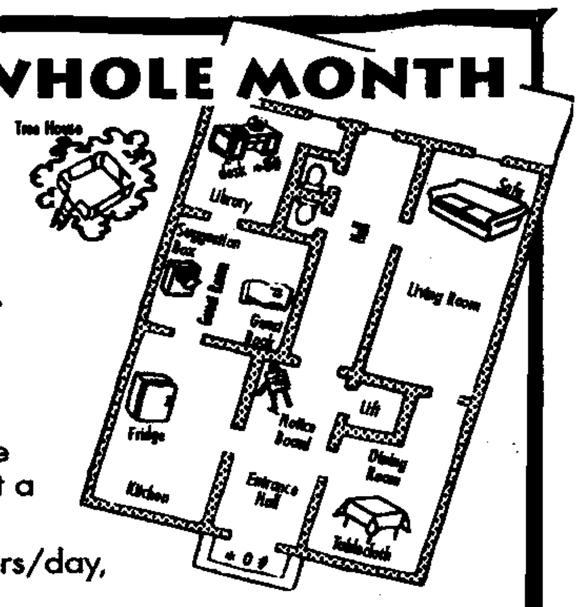

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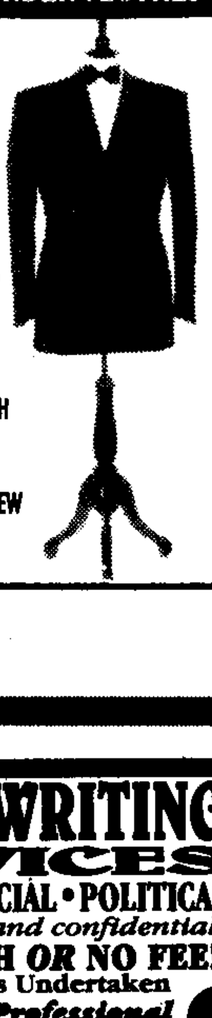

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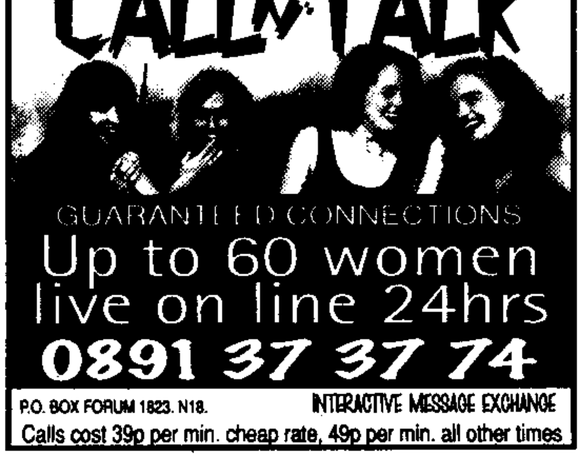

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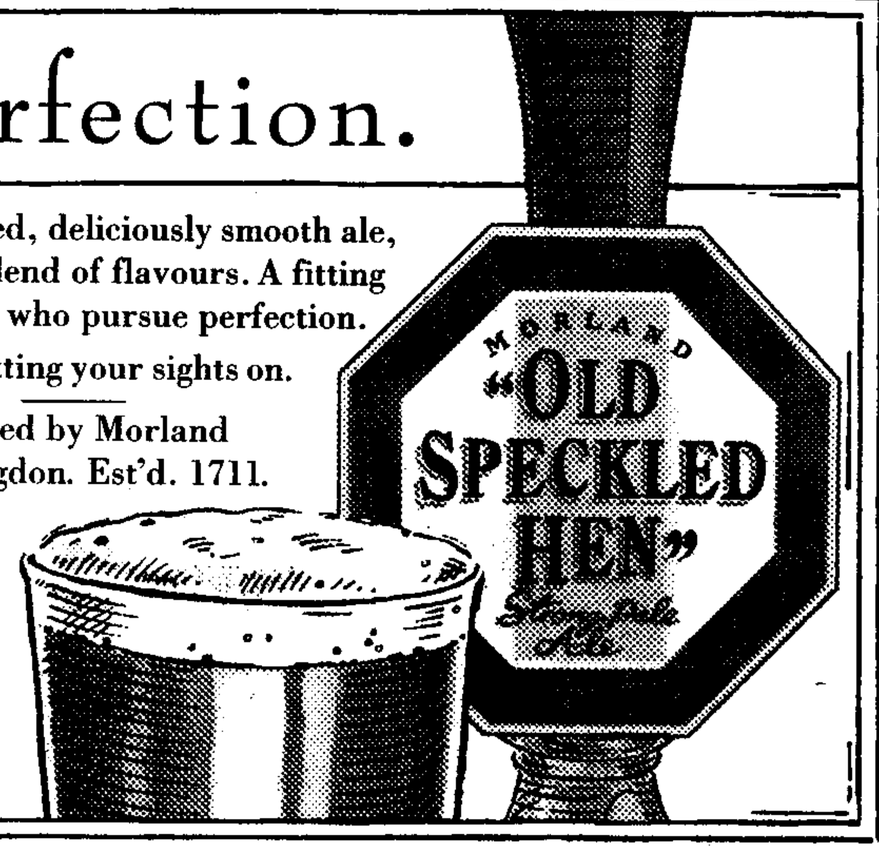

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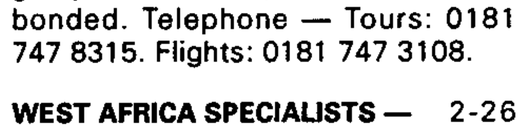

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FUN-LOVING, vertically challenged graduate, 27, seeks similar female for laughter and wine in London. Letter please. Box 0983.

PLEASE RESCUE abandoned doctor, 27. Sweet attractive girl sought for lasting relationship. Please reply with photo. Box 1083.

TALL, SLIM, handsome West London gent, 39, seeks fun and excitement with attractive lady. Total discretion assured. Box 1183.

MALE SPORTSMAN, 40, 5'8", gsoh, likes eating out, seeks exciting lady for discreet affair. Box 1283.

MAN, LATE THIRTIES, tall, cultured, seeks sexy woman, ideally older, for discreet passion. London. Box 1383.

GRADUATE MALE, 55, SW Herts, kind, warm, humorous, many interests, would love to meet very buxom female for lasting relationship. Box 1483.

YOU TOO have thought about it. You're curious and looking for a little extra. I'm male, 40, tall, professional, married, discreet, and in Bucks. Talk to me. Box 1583.

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL male, 43, married but unfulfilled seeks interesting lady for friendship, sharing mutual interests and hopefully lots of hugs and kisses. London and SE Area. Box 1683.

IT'S DISGRACEFUL the way married men, who are obviously creeps, use these ads to try and find the apocryphal bored housewife for casual sex. I hope no one replies to them. However, if anybody does, would they mind replying to me as well please? I'm much better than them. London and around. Box 1783.

SLENDER, WINSOME woman, 30s, attached, seeks tall, fun-loving officer and gentleman for wicked weekends and more. Gloucestershire based but mobile. Box 1883.

EX/PROFESSIONAL sportsman, 40, athletic, seeks discreet relationship with lady, older perhaps. Box 1983.

LADY (36), Phd, sophisticated, attractive, slim — would make perfect doctor's wife — unfortunately no perfect doctors around at the moment. Hampstead. Box 2083.

TWO STUNNING twenty-something London Liars seek Ugly Boring women for no particular purpose. Box 1182.

AMUSING, ENTERTAINING, man, 30s, seeks congenial London dinner companion. Struggling student or successful businesswoman equally welcome. Smutty soh. Ideal! Box 1382.

RICHARD GERE TYPE seeks Julia Roberts or better. Box 3682.

BEAUTIFUL, INTELLIGENT, fun, sensitive, unhappily married woman, Surrey, seeks tall gentleman, 30s/40s. Box 1282.

AMUSING, ENTERTAINING, man, 30s, seeks congenial London dinner companion. Struggling student or successful businesswoman equally welcome. Smutty soh. Ideal! Box 1382.

ATHLETIC, VIRILE, good looking solvent man, 40s, seeks intelligent, classy, sexy lady for passionate, discreet affair. Photo please. Box 1482.

TALL, TANNED, 30 year old male seeks caring female for fun nights out and passionate nights in. NW, anywhere. Box 1582.

VERY ATTRACTIVE BRUNETTE, 47, seeks very attractive man 35-55. I'm successful but restless, married but free for weekends in Paris or Rome — but let's start with lunch in London. Box 3583.

SUCCESSFUL MALE, 6ft, slim, 54, n/s, not bad looking, generous, cheerful, wealthy, interests travel, golf, bridge, seeks stylish lady with shapely figure to carry off into the sunset. My photo for yours. Box 0882.

PETITE, SLIM BRUNETTE, 30, very busy but lonely, is longing to meet tall, witty, intelligent man, 30-45, for dinners, theatre and inspiration. Likes: long walks, wine, poetry. Dislikes: moustaches, bad cooking. Photo appreciated. Box 2183.

PEARLY TEETH, no shark. Honest, slim surgeon, 29, seeks classy, petite female for true love. Box 2283.

YOUNG SCRUMPER knows ripe fruit is sweeter. Discreet male, 25, passion to spare, seeks slim older woman, 30s, to be apple of his eye. London/anywhere. Box 2383.

SUCCESSFUL, PROFESSIONAL man and showbiz entrepreneur. Slim, 43, single, 5'10". WLTM an intelligent, distinctive looking female for TLC. Box 2483.

SECOND-TIME sporty student, M, 37, separated, no children, seeks stimulation and solace from solitude in London. If you are F, 30-40, married, single, separated, or somewhere between, and fancy theatre nights out, or simply a release from the day, then try me. Box 2583.

MALE, 40s, gsoh, n/s, likes music, travel, eating out. WLTM female, 30s, Cambridgeshire area. Photo please. Box 2883.

OBERON, 30, n/s, slim, attractive, broad soh, varied interests, seeks Titania to work mischievous magic in the woods with ALAWP. Thames Valley or surrounds. Box 2993.

WOULD-BE BIGGLES, 30, seeks Amy Johnson to light my burners and rub my hairy chest. Oxon, Berks. Box 3083.

BEAUTY WITH BRAINS required by 36 y/o male. Write indicating affinity to languor, classical music, books, theatre, long walks, crosswords, good food and wine. Box 3183.

FROGGY LADY, 25, lost in Munich, seeks intelligent, amusing male company for oohlalas! and much more... Box 3283.

SLIM, TALL, BLACK male, 40ish, working class, seeks attractive lady 25-40ish for mutual enjoyment. Photo appreciated. London area. Box 3383.

SERIOUS-MINDED intellectual mid-50s man with periodic weakness for overdoing the hedonism seeks slim, affectionate woman with whom to do nice things (going out, staying in, falling over, etc). Photo? London. Box 3483.

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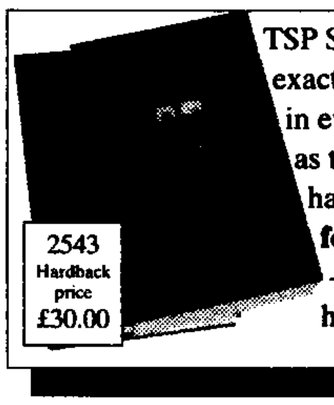

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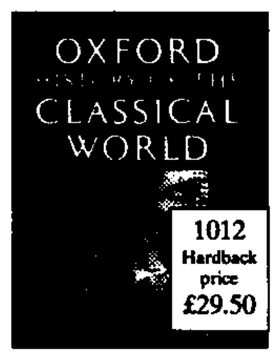

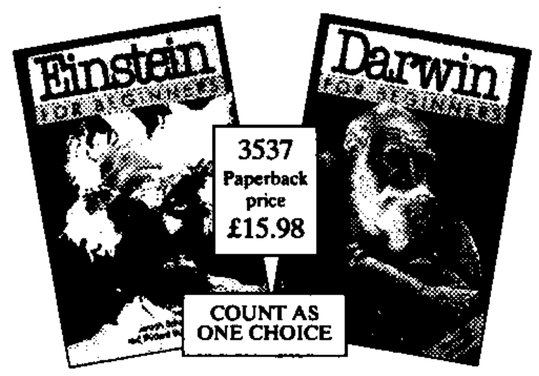

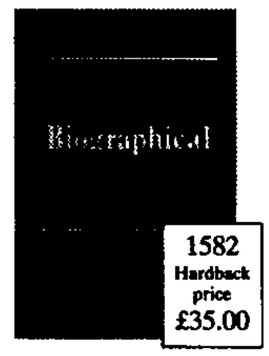

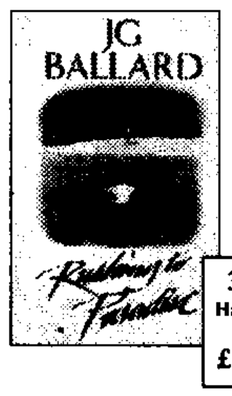

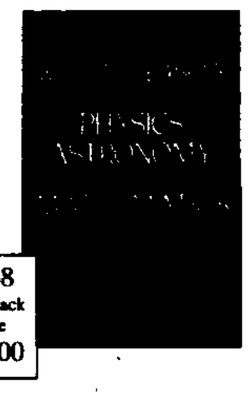

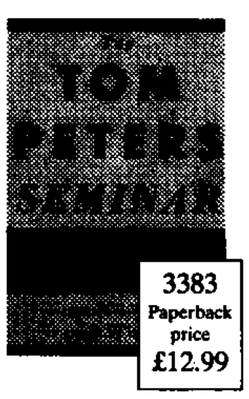

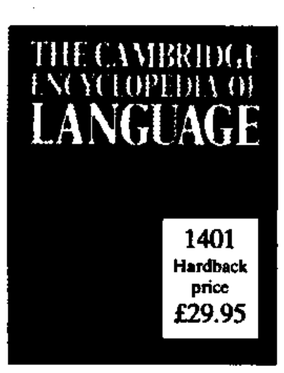

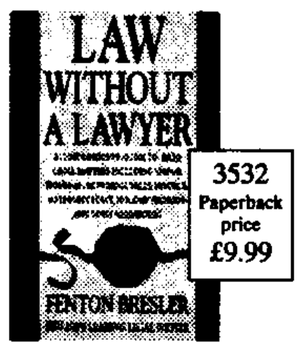

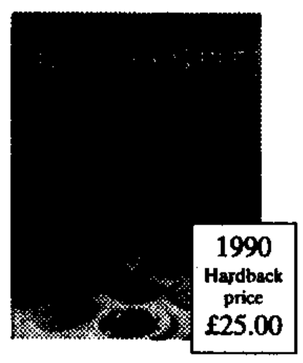

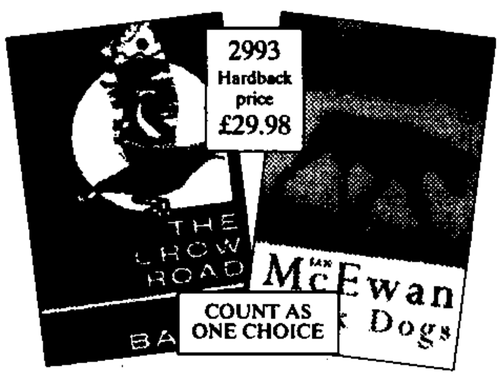

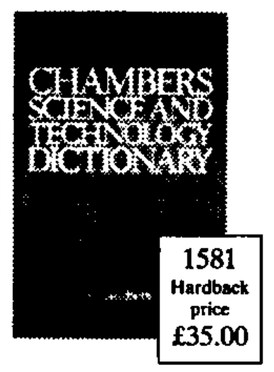

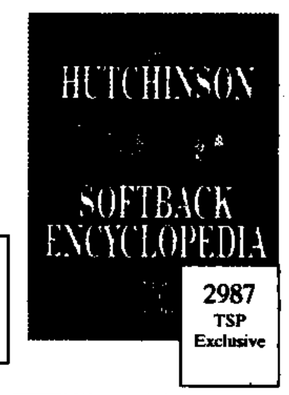

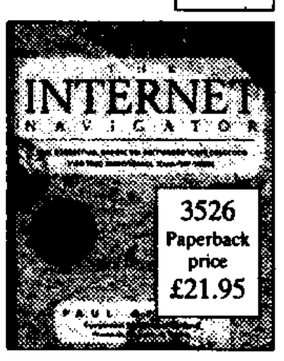

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